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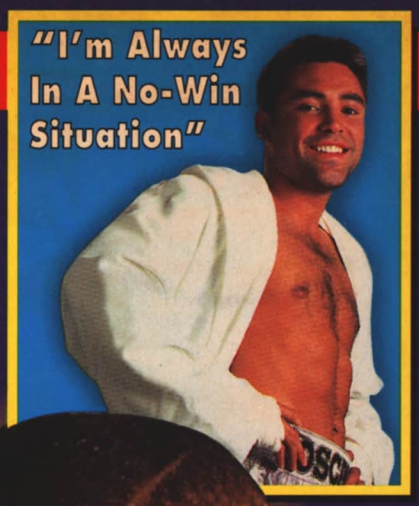

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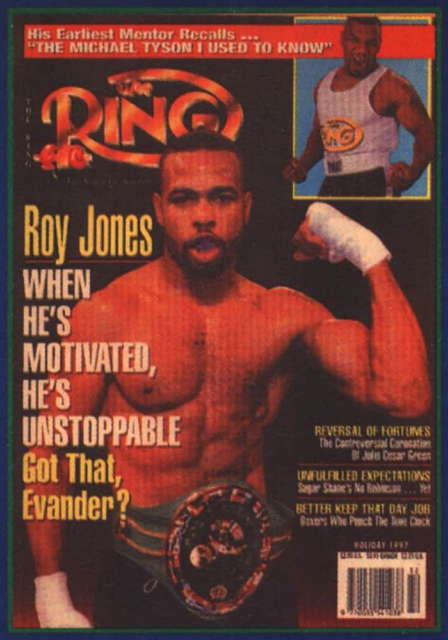

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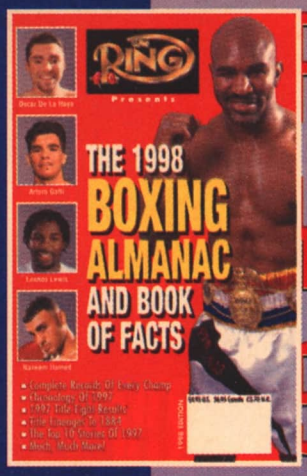

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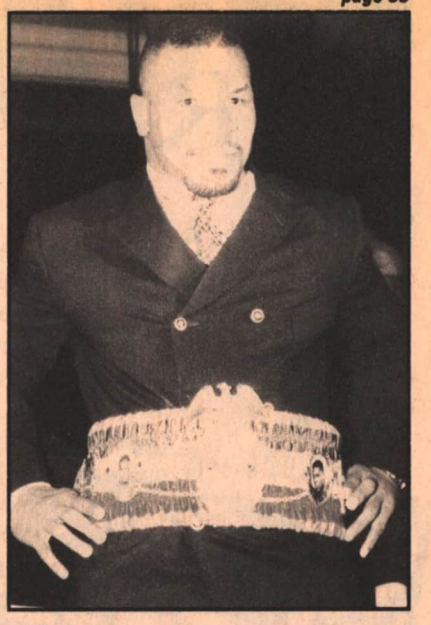

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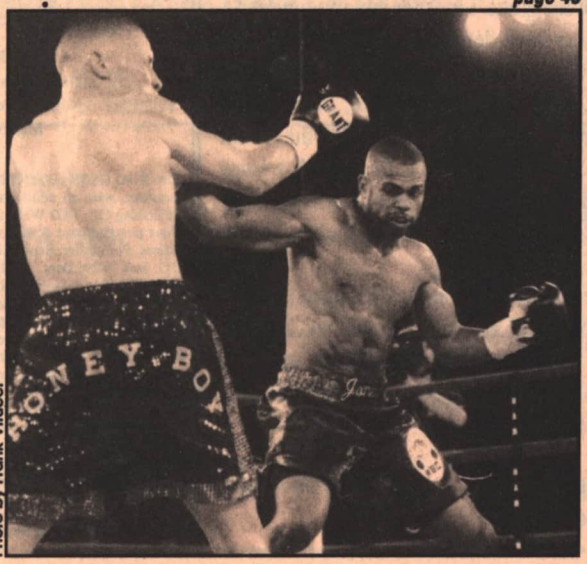

Photo by Frank Vitucci

Cover:
Tyson by Jason Ross Lavin
De La Hoya by Andy Bernstein/courtesy of Top Rank
Cover Design by Joseph Kalman

RINGSIDE

For a country slightly smaller than the state of New York, Cuba has produced an inordinate number of outstanding boxers. Since professional sports were banned in the Caribbean country shortly after the communist revolution in 1959, those fighters have, for the most part, been restricted to the amateur ranks. But prior to the advent of Fidel Castro, Cuba was a fertile nursery for world-class pros.

There are already four Cuban fighters enshrined at the International Boxing Hall of Fame in Canastota, New York: Kid Chocolate, Kid Gavilan, Jose Napoles, and Luis Rodriguez. But they are by no means the only noteworthy fighters to emanate from the island nation. Tragic welterweight champion Benny "Kid" Paret was Cuban, as were featherweight champions Ultiminio "Sugar" Ramos and Jose Legra. There have also been numerous top-notch contenders such as Black Bill, Kid Tunero, Orlando Zulueta, Florentino Fernandez, Doug Vaillant, and Jose Stable, fighters who might very well have won championships in these days of split titles.

For the first half of the 20th century, Cuba was a boxing hotbed, visited by many of the major fighters from around the world. In 1915, when promoters were searching for a friendly site for the controversial Jess Willard-Jack Johnson bout, they settled for Oriental Race Track in Mariano. During the rule of military dictator Zaldivar Batista (1933-'59), Havana was known as the Paris of the Caribbean, a hedonistic playground complete with gambling casinos and an abundance of boxing.

After Castro put the kibosh on the pro game, Cuba became an amateur powerhouse, dominating international competition for the next four decades. Undoubtedly the most famous of Cuba's amateur stars was Teofilo Stevenson, the giant heavyweight who won Olympic gold in 1972, '76, and '80. Thanks to his proclivity for knocking off the United States' best amateur heavyweights, Stevenson became almost as famous in this country as he was at home, and there was even talk of a fight with Muhammad Ali. Although Stevenson has faded from the public eye in the U.S. since he retired from the ring, boxing fans still debate how he would have fared against Ali, and when freelance writer Bill Iezzi told me he was going to Cuba and offered to interview Stevenson for THE RING, I enthusiastically accepted his proposal. The result is "Teofilo Stevenson: The Best Interview 50 Bucks And A Bottle Of Rum Could Buy!" *(page 22)*, a provocative update on one of the game's most enigmatic figures.

In recent years, more and more Cuban boxers have defected in order to reap the monetary rewards available in the professional ranks. While some of them, like WBC cruiserweight champion Juan Carlos Gomez, have settled elsewhere, most of the Cuban expatriates are now based in the United States and fight under the Team Freedom banner. As a companion piece to the Stevenson feature, this month's issue also includes an article entitled "Team Freedom: Can Cuba's Best Turn Amateur Glory Into Professional Excellence?" *(page 26)*, an overview of the Cuban boxers presently living and fighting in this country.

Whether or not Team Freedom will produce another Gavilan or Chocolate remains to be seen. But there's no doubt that its members will add considerable spice to the contemporary scene, and considering Cuba's rich boxing history and the growing number of Cuban fighters defecting, it's highly likely that there will be additional world champions of Cuban heritage in the near future.

Nigel Collins
Editor-in-Chief

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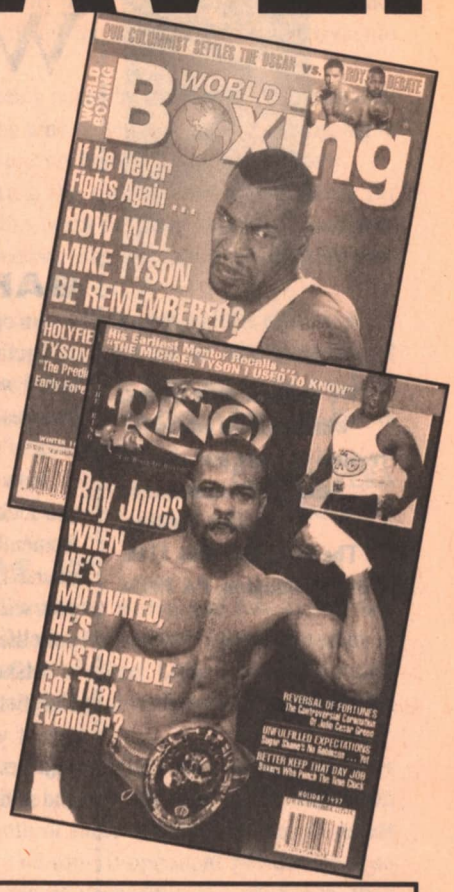

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COME OUT WRITING

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BANKE ON TYSON'S COMEBACK

An open letter to Mike Tyson:

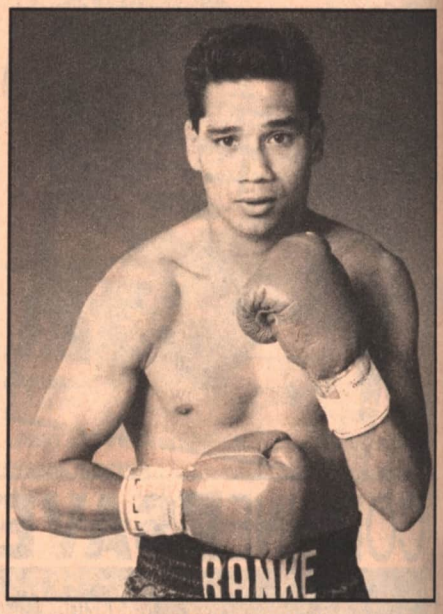
Brother Mike Tyson, you need to go and fight Holyfield again for yourself. This time, kick his butt. I was there the first fight, and you looked great. You were in great shape, and you threw a lot of punches. Evander had a good day. I also gave him love.

Now you have to do what you do best and go out and kick his butt. Don't think about King's people. Remember something: When you were in jail by yourself, where were all those fools then? Do it for yourself this time, whatever happens. Go on with your life, you'll be a better champion.

Mike, I saw you four days before the first Holyfield fight at the Golden Gloves Gym. I asked you if you knew about my condition, right? You said yes. Then you gave me a kiss on the forehead and said we all have problems. I'll never forget that.

PAUL BANKE
Mar Vista, CA

[Paul Banke, a former WBC super bantamweight champion, is living with AIDS.]



Former WBC super bantamweight champion Paul Banke thought he would drop his friend, Mike Tyson, a few lines of encouragement upon Tyson's recent plea to the New Jersey State Athletic Control Board for his boxing license.

TIME'S TICKING FOR OSCAR

I believe that Oscar De La Hoya's best years are being wasted. In 1997 "The Golden Boy" fought five world title fights, a great feat for any champ in any division. But while the Hector Camacho bout was intriguing and colorful to most people, almost everyone could have predicted the outcome. David Kamau and Wilfredo Rivera were never even mentioned when fans discussed the opponents they most wanted to see De La Hoya fight.

For the past year, people have been calling for a rematch with Pernell Whitaker, or bouts with Felix Trinidad and Ike Quartey. I think most fans would even settle for a matchup with Jose Luis Lopez. But it seems De La Hoya's handlers have no intention of pairing him with an opponent who can provide him with any significant test.

The saddest part is that the apex of Oscar's physical abilities as a fighter may not be far away. Like Mike Tyson in the late-'80s, De La Hoya may soon begin to decline. In addition to this, the lack of any real challenge could rob him of the focus and determination that a champion needs.

I think De La Hoya would have little trouble defeating Trinidad or Quartey. None of these fights will happen in 1998. His management will serve up opponents with minimal risk. Ultimately, this will make Oscar De La Hoya a lesser fighter.

PETE R. CORY
Kingston, Ontario

WHO'S WINNING?

We've all witnessed some horrible decisions in boxing: Whitaker vs. Chavez, Holmes vs. Spinks II, and recently Briggs vs. Foreman. Not many people know the scoring in Douglas vs. Tyson, because the fight ended in a knockout, but it draws attention nonetheless. Douglas was clearly dominating the fight, yet one judge actually had Tyson ahead, and another had the fight scored even going into the 10th round. Bad decisions such as these do tremendous damage to the credibility of a sport that already has an image problem. The problem is, boxing is the only sport where the score is hidden not only from the fans, but from the athletes as well. We are all kept completely in the dark until the bout is over.

Posting the scores between rounds is the solution. Not only would spectators know who's ahead, but judges could be held more accountable for their scoring. Why? Because fans would react unfavorably to a badly scored round much like they do to bad officiating in other sports. Most importantly, the fighters themselves would know the score. This may improve the quality of the fights. If a fighter knows he is officially behind, he will undoubtedly fight harder. Boxing has many problems that get discussed endlessly. Well, it's time to make some changes. Posting scores will go a long way toward improving a sport that is in total disarray.

CHRISTOPHER BURNS
Austin, TX

BOXERS ARE THE BEST

I really enjoyed Jeff Ryan's "Ryan Out Loud" column in the September 1998 issue entitled "The Fighter." My husband and I are boxing fans, but we know all sorts of sports fans and have heard all their stories about baseball, basketball, and football snobs that they have met. I've attended the International Boxing Hall of Fame three years in a row, and I agree with Ryan that they are the best. Here are some of the things I've witnessed:

•Wilfredo Benitez hanging around tired and exhausted from his illness, just to sign autographs and take pictures with fans.

•Marvelous Marvin Hagler stopping to sign my ringpost after I told him that his was the only name missing. His pride would not let him ignore me, even though the security people were trying to take him away.

•Sugar Ray Leonard being pulled by the security people because he had already spent a long time signing autographs, yet stopping to put his arm around me so that my husband could take a picture.

•Felix Trinidad taking the time even while training for Mahenge Zulu to meet this crazy fan from New York, and then taking more time to converse, take pictures, and even talk boxing. His father was also a sweetheart.

There are too many other examples and so little space to mention them all. I have to say that there are no other professional athletes that I admire so much or have more respect for than boxers. By the respect and generosity they give to their fans, boxers prove that they *are* the ultimate athletes.

DAISY RIVERA
Bronx, NY

EASY DOES IT

I find it humorous how boxing writers and fans expect Roy Jones and Oscar De La Hoya to abandon their current procedure in order to meet the expectations of others. Little seems to be understood about their intentions, though the evidence has been unfolding right in front of us.

These two young men enjoy matinee idol status, make over a million dollars a bout, and may not face stiff competition once in a given year. Both of these athletes continue to repeat the process of beating one top-10 opponent per division, so they can win a belt and regard themselves as a champion, then repeat the process in the next higher division. Not a bad gig if you can find it.

I don't think Roy and Oscar have to display the same competitive level of Evander Holyfield, who only seeks the best. Nor do they feel obligated to actively pursue what competition exists in the absence of outstanding challengers, like Ricardo Lopez does.

Ages from now, when the best of the best from each division are discussed, and their accomplishments weighed against each other, it will be unfortunate if these two great athletes are remembered more for what they didn't do than for what they actually accomplished.

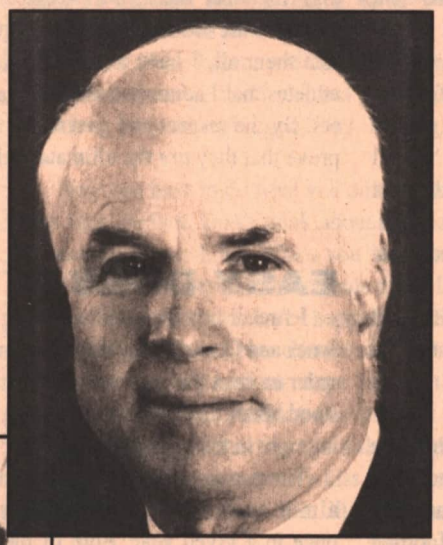
CHRISTIAN SHREVE
Duchesne, UT ■

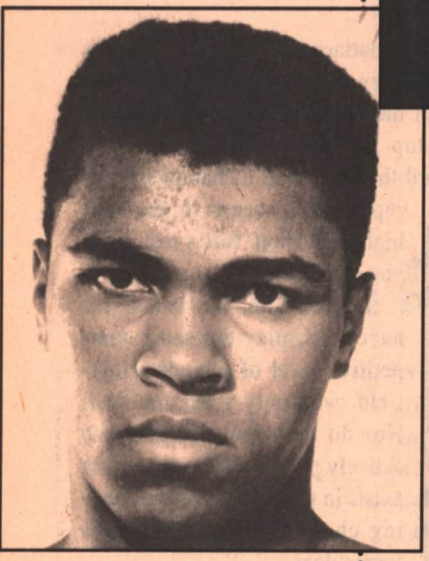
Photo by Tom Casino

Felix Trinidad, shown here at 1998 Hall of Fame festivities in Canastota, New York, is just one of many boxers who are freely willing to give of themselves for the fans, notes reader Daisy Rivera.

ROUND ONE

BILL OF RIGHTS





McCain (above) names new bill after legendary champ Ali

Imagine a world in which fighters are not taken advantage of financially, title shots are awarded to legitimate contenders, and bogus alphabet organizations slowly fade from existence. Sound like some sort of unattainable boxing heaven? Time will tell how realistic these improvements are, but if the Muhammad Ali Boxing Reform Act passes through the legislative and executive branches of the U.S. government, that boxing heaven may just be located right here on earth.

U.S. Senators John McCain (who authored the Professional Boxing Safety Act, which was approved in 1996) and Richard Bryan introduced the new legislation in early-July, and, if passed, it could forever alter the landscape of the sport. How strictly the aims of the Ali Reform Act can be enforced remains to be seen, but as far as the overall good of boxers and boxing are concerned, its intentions are certainly noble.

The first of the three segments of the bill is designed to protect fighters from exploitation by promoters and sanctioning bodies. Many boxers end up signing long-term contracts with promoters just because a certain promoter has the power to garner title shots for them, but the Ali Reform Act would place limitations on the length of the promoter's rights to the fighter.

The second section of the bill seeks to better monitor the practices of boxing's numerous sanctioning bodies by forcing them to constantly justify movements within their rankings. The aim is to make the alphabet groups' ratings more a matter of public knowledge and eliminate the payoffs that are suspected to be influential in determining a fighter's ranking.

The third part of the Ali Reform Act also involves public knowledge, focusing on the financial aspect of individual fights. The state attorney general's office and the state commission are to gain access to the specific charges and fees facing each fighter, as well as copies of the fight contract. This part of the bill only applies to fights scheduled for 10 rounds or more, however.

The ramifications of the legislation seem overwhelmingly positive to those looking out for the welfare of fighters and to fans who have grown weary of mandatory defense mismatches. But, of course, not everyone is thrilled with the aims of the bill. Chief among its opponents is IBF President Bob Lee.

"In the beginning, this legislation was supposed to be enacted for health and safety reasons," Lee said shortly after the McCain-Bryan bill was introduced. "Now the government is trying to tell us how to run our business. And the wind-up is going to be, unless we get someone to stop them, they're going to put us out of business."

Boxing heaven, indeed.

—Eric Raskin

THE STRONG ARMS OF THE LAW

The U.S. Congress isn't the only legal body studying ways to improve boxing. The National Association of Attorney Generals has formed an investigative task force, made up of state attorney generals from states that have professional boxing on a regular basis. When it comes to hooks and crosses, the most knowledgeable member of the team has to be Illinois State Attorney General Jim Ryan, who was the Chicago Golden Gloves middleweight champion in 1964.

"I'm a big fan. Boxing taught me discipline, competitiveness, and the value of having long-range goals," said Ryan. "It also taught me that if you get knocked down, you've got to get up and keep going."

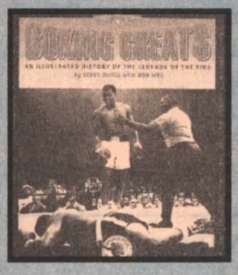
Former middleweight champion Tony Zale ran the boxing program at the Chicago CYC where Ryan got his boxing start, and Chuck Bodak was one of his trainers. Although Ryan is well past his fistic prime, he donned the gloves and headgear again recently to help raise money for the Legal Aid Foundation. He boxed fellow attorney Joe Berkett, losing the decision, but going the distance.

Ryan came out of retirement for charity

"I support boxing, especially on an amateur level," said Ryan. "That's one of the reasons it's so important that the pro game is clean. Because what happens in the pros reflects on the amateurs, encouraging more kids to get into boxing."

We understand that Ryan is up for reelection in the near future. Maybe he should skip the normal ballot-box procedure and challenge his opponent to duke it out for the honor of being the state's top prosecutor. But if he does, Ryan had better make sure he doesn't get the same judges who worked the Berkett bout.

THE BOXING BOOKSHELF



The seemingly endless parade of boxing coffee table books continues with *Boxing Greats: An Illustrated History Of The Legends Of The Ring* (256 pages, Courage Books, $24.98, hard cover) by Steve Bunce and Bob Mee. When stacked up against the rest of the genre, it falls somewhere in the middle of the pack, a solid, workmanlike effort by a couple of old pros with almost 40 years on the boxing beat between them.

Although there are a scattering of unfamiliar shots, most of the 450 photos are ones boxing bibliophiles have seen before. Although hardly inspired, the writing is clear and concise, and wisely steers clear of hero-worshiping hyperbole. The first chapter, "Ancient Pugs And Victorian Gentlemen," is especially interesting, as it covers boxing's roots in more detail than usually found in similar efforts. All the usual favorites are well represented, and there are even a couple of pages dedicated to Charley Burley, an unsung hero who usually doesn't get much space in this sort of book.

If *Boxing Greats* has a distinction, it's the larger-than-usual, 10⅜"x 11¼" format, which is almost big enough for one of Kramer's coffee table books that actually *is* a coffee table.

—Nigel Collins

Mancini: Second chance at stardom

LIGHTS ... CAMERA ... BOOM BOOM!

Word is former WBA lightweight champ Ray Mancini performs in front of a movie camera just like he did in a boxing ring. According to screenwriter Sam Henry Kass, he is not the most technically proficient thespian, but he acts with a certain heart and guttiness that comes through prominently and is sure to win the audience over.

The sparkplug from Youngstown, Ohio, went down swinging in his first world title shot, a 1981 meeting with Alexis Arguello, but he bounced back to achieve his championship dream, and retired in 1985 as one of the most popular fighters in the world (though a couple of failed comebacks would inevitably follow). Likewise, when he dove headfirst into the world of acting 13 years ago, he did not find great success immediately. But "Boom Boom" has continued to plug away, and finally got his first opportunity for a real breakthrough this year.

A remake of the 1947 classic *Body And Soul* is due to hit theaters this fall, and in it Mancini tries to fill the shoes of John Garfield by playing the film's main character, Charlie Davis. Mancini bought up the rights to the movie, hired Kass to update the story, and cast himself as the smalltown Ohio boxer who seeks fame and fortune in Las Vegas because "this is what I was born for. It's not just me playing a boxer. This is a character with substance and complexities and trials. It's the perfect opportunity—my chance to show something."

If Mancini really acts like he fights, he may end up a Hollywood success yet. And *Body And Soul* seems to be the perfect vehicle.

TV FIGHTS OF THE MONTH

DATE	WINNER/LOSER	NETWORK	DIVISION	SIGNIFICANCE	MATCHUP	RESULT
7-10-98	**Fred Norwood W 12 Luis Mendoza**	**ESPN**	**WBA f**	**B-**	**C+**	**C+**
Not Norwood's best outing, but boxing's busiest champ is still too much for shopworn Mendoza						
7-11-98	Goyo Vargas KO 6 Tracy Patterson	PPV	jl	C+	B	B
We'd forgotten what a focused, well-trained Vargas was capable of						
7-11-98	Gabe Ruelas KO 6 Troy Dorsey	PPV	jl	C	B-	A-
We all knew it would turn out this way, but it sure was fun while it lasted						
7-11-98	Miguel Angel Gonzalez KO 5 Alexis Perez	PPV	jw	B+	D	B
If only Gonzalez could look this good against top opposition						
7-11-98	Jesse James Leija W 12 Azumah Nelson	PPV	l	B	A-	B+
Call us crazy, but we wouldn't mind seeing these two go at it again						
7-12-98	Zab Judah KO 2 Otillio Villarreal	ESPN2	jw	C	C-	B
This was as pretty a knockout as you'll ever see; Judah a world champ in the making						
7-14-98	Chris Byrd W 10 Ross Puritty	USA	h	C+	D	C
Can someone please give us Byrd against a top-10 heavyweight already?						
7-18-98	Derrick Gainer W 10 Kevin Kelley	HBO	f	A-	B+	C-
Looks like Kelley's ready to make the move to broadcasting; talk about bland						
7-18-98	**Roy Jones W 12 Lou Del Valle**	**HBO**	**WBA/WBC lh**	**A+**	**A-**	**B-**
Jones takes 11 of 12 rounds, and all anyone can talk about is the knockdown						
7-18-98	Carl Thompson KO 9 Chris Eubank	ESPN2	c	B-	B	B+
Not as good as the original, but close; who knew Eubank had such heart?						
7-19-98	Danny Romero KO 1 Tomas Cordova	ESPN2	b	B	D	B
"Kid Dynamite" warms up for rematch with Tapia						
7-21-98	Andrew Golota W 10 Corey Sanders	USA	h	B+	C	A
Sanders gives Golota a scare in bloody, wild brawl						
7-26-98	**Mark Johnson W 12 Luis Rolon**	**ABC**	**IBF fl**	**A-**	**C-**	**C**
"Too Sharp" pitches near shutout; he needs a challenge, and soon						
7-26-98	Vinny Pazienza W 10 Glenwood Brown	ESPN2	sm	C	B	A
Proof that you don't need two great fighters to make a very good fight						
7-28-98	Anthony Jones W 10 Steve Martinez	USA	jm	C+	B	B+
Jones becoming a very marketable, durable fighter; could land title shot in near future						
7-28-98	Antwun Echols KO 6 Urbano Gurrola	USA	m	B	C+	B
He's no Marvin Hagler, but powerpunching Echols making noise at 160						
8-2-98	Drake Thadzi KO 7 John Scully	ESPN2	lh	C	C	C-
Further proof that underachieving Scully will always find a way to lose the big fight						
8-4-98	Oba Carr W 10 Alfred Ankamah	USA	w	B	C	B-
Carr stays in line for a shot at "The Golden Boy"						
8-6-98	Orlin Norris W 12 Nate Miller	ESPN	h	C-	C	D
Norris gets revenge for title fight loss two years ago, but does anyone care?						

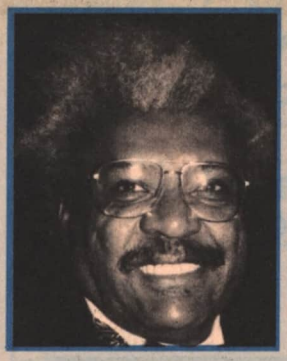
Category Explanation: "Significance"—The importance of the bout to the division and the fighters' futures; "Matchup"—The quality of the fighters and the prefight determination of how their styles will mesh; "Result"—How the bout turned out, from the viewer's perspective.

(World title fights in **bold** type)

Division key: h—heavyweight; c—cruiserweight; lh—light heavyweight; sm—super middleweight; m—middleweight; jm—junior middleweight; w—welterweight; jw—junior welterweight; l—lightweight; jl—junior lightweight; f—featherweight; jf—junior featherweight; b—bantamweight; jb—junior bantamweight; fl—flyweight; jfl—junior flyweight; s—strawweight

Network key: PPV—Pay-Per-View; Show—Showtime

OUTSIDE THE ROPES



King: Back in business in A.C.

Johnson: Helps hoops team

In mid-July, a federal appeals court in New York City supported a 1996 ruling that determined **Mike Tyson** owed former trainer **Kevin Rooney** $4.4-million for unjustly firing him. Rooney was dropped in 1988, violating an oral contract stating Rooney would be Tyson's trainer "for as long as the boxer fights professionally." Rooney's lawyer, **Michael Coyle**, said his client will be entitled to $7.6-million when interest is factored in ... The New Jersey Casino Control Commission voted unanimously in early-August to lift a four-year ban preventing **Don King** from promoting in the state's gambling halls. King was barred in 1994 when he was accused of insurance fraud, but his recent acquittal prompted the vote ... Former heavyweight contender **Tommy Morrison**, already in the process of appealing a six-month jail term for drunken driving, was arrested in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, on July 16 on suspicion of drunken driving, destruction of private property, and running a red light. A local detective said Morrison drove off from a gas station with the gas nozzle and hose still hooked to his Jeep Cherokee, and an officer found the nozzle and broken hose hanging from Morrison's tank when he was pulled over for running a red light ... Alaskan heavyweight prospect **Cody Koch**, 25, was found dead in the early morning hours of July 25 outside a Michigan nightclub. The cause of death had not yet been determined at press time, though it was known that he had just had an argument with a woman inside the establishment. Koch was 24-2 (20) ... Undefeated heavyweight **Kirk Johnson** did a good deed in July, responding to the needs of a Bay Shore, Long Island, youth basketball team by purchasing new uniforms for the players. "When he overheard that a team needed new uniforms, he insisted on helping out," said co-manager **Chris Seeger** ... **Sylvester Stallone**, who has been out of the boxing movie business since the 1990 release of *Rocky V*, was inspired by a story in the August 1998 issue of THE RING to consider a return. After reading **"Pat and Mike McMurtry: Brothers-In-Arms That Misfortune Couldn't Separate,"** Stallone reportedly arranged to fly Pat, a top heavyweight contender in the 1950s, from Tacoma, Washington, to New York City to discuss buying the rights to the story of the brothers who had to leave the game after suffering brain damage.

THE PUNCHLINES

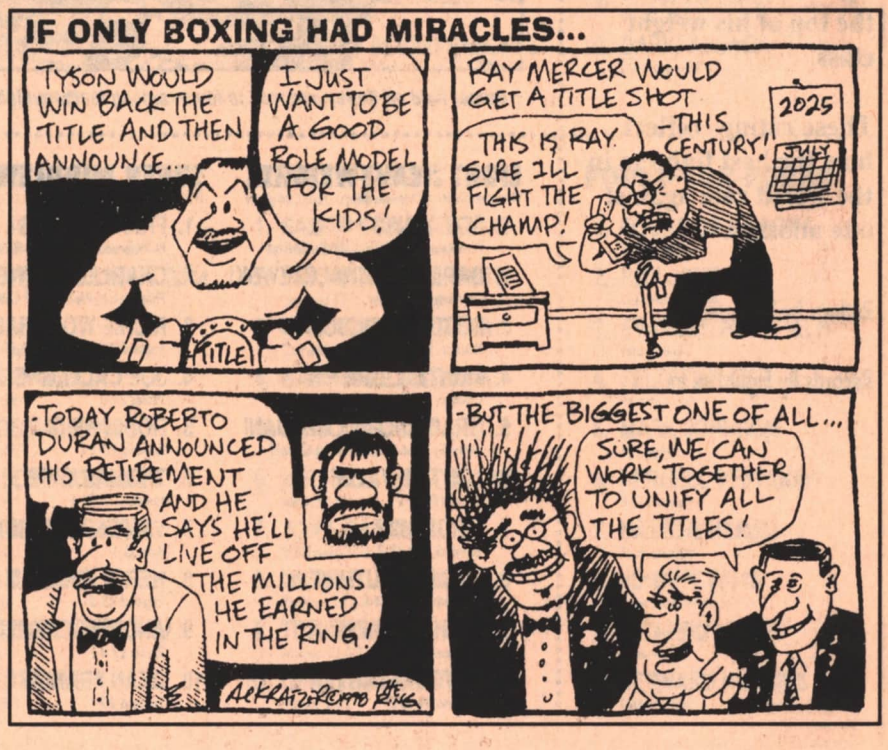
"If I hit [an opponent] and his eye fell out of his head, I would eat it before he got it back. That's the kind of mentality you have to have."

—Bobby Czyz, suggesting why Mike Tyson might have bit Evander Holyfield

"James got popped real good. Maybe it's time for us to go fishing now."

—John Russell, trainer of Buster Douglas, after Douglas' one-round kayo loss to Lou Savarese

AL KRATZER'S VIEW



THE RING RATINGS

For Period Ended August 11, 1998

How Our Ratings Are Compiled

In each division, fighters are ranked according to their abilities and accomplishments.

Being champion does not necessarily mean a fighter will be rated at the top of his weight class.

These ratings reflect how the best fighters in the world rate against one another.

Ratings By The Editors

Records By Fight Fax Inc.

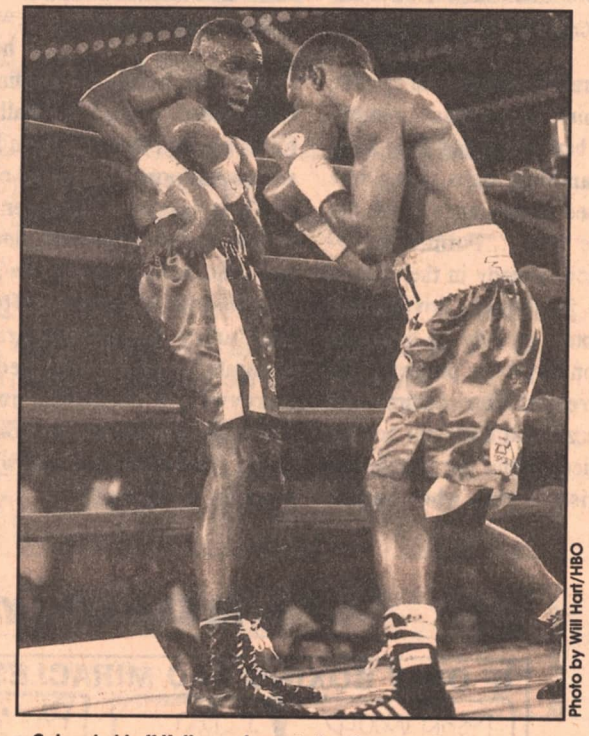


Photo by Will Hart/HBO

Gainer held off Kelley and rose to fourth among featherweights

HEAVYWEIGHTS
Weight Unlimited

1. **EVANDER HOLYFIELD** — Fairburn, GA 35-3 (WBA/IBF Champ)
2. **LENNOX LEWIS** — England 33-1 (WBC Champ)
3. **GEORGE FOREMAN** — Marshall, TX 76-5
4. **MICHAEL MOORER** — Detroit, MI 39-2
5. **MICHAEL GRANT** — Norristown, PA 28-0
6. **SHANNON BRIGGS** — New York, NY 31-2
7. **CHRIS BYRD** — Flint, MI 26-0
8. **IKE IBEABUCHI** — Dallas, TX 18-0
9. **DAVID TUA** — Totowa, NJ 30-1
10. **ANDREW GOLOTA** — Chicago, IL 31-3

CRUISERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 190 pounds

1. **FABRICE TIOZZO** — France 39-1 (WBA Champ)
2. **JUAN CARLOS GOMEZ** — Germany 23-0 (WBC Champ)
3. **IMAMU MAYFIELD** — New Brunswick, NJ 18-1 (IBF Champ)
4. **MARCELO DOMINGUEZ** — Argentina 22-2-1
5. **CARL THOMPSON** — England 24-4
6. **ROBERT DANIELS** — Miami, FL 38-3-1
7. **ARTHUR WILLIAMS** — Las Vegas, NV 28-4-1
8. **RALF ROCCHIGIANI** — Germany 40-9-7
9. **SAUL MONTANA** — Mexico 31-6
10. **KENNY KEENE** — Emmett, ID 43-3

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
Weight limit: 175 pounds

1. **ROY JONES** — Pensacola, FL 37-1 (WBC/WBA Champ)
2. **DARIUSZ MICHALCZEWSKI** — Germany 38-0
3. **REGGIE JOHNSON** — Houston, TX 38-5-1 (IBF Champ)
4. **MONTELL GRIFFIN** — Chicago, IL 30-1
5. **GRACIANO ROCCHIGIANI** — Germany 40-4-1 (WBC Interim Champ)
6. **LOU DEL VALLE** — Bronx, NY 27-2
7. **VIRGIL HILL** — Bismarck, ND 43-3
8. **WILLIAM GUTHRIE** — Philadelphia, PA 24-1
9. **MICHAEL NUNN** — Davenport, IA 52-4
10. **ANTONIO TARVER** — Orlando, FL 10-0

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 168 pounds

1. **FRANKIE LILES** — N. Hollywood, CA 32-1 (WBA Champ)
2. **CHARLES BREWER** — Philadelphia, PA 31-5 (IBF Champ)
3. **RICHIE WOODHALL** — England 24-1 (WBC Champ)
4. **JOE CALZAGHE** — Wales 25-0
5. **ROBIN REID** — England 26-1-1
6. **THOMAS TATE** — Houston, TX 34-5
7. **VINCENZO NARDIELLO** — Italy 33-6
8. **HEROL GRAHAM** — England 48-6
9. **ANDREI SCHKALIKOV** — Russia 29-4-1
10. **DEAN FRANCIS** — England 20-1

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 160 pounds

1. **BERNARD HOPKINS** — Philadelphia, PA 34-2-1 (IBF Champ)
2. **WILLIAM JOPPY** — Washington, D.C. 25-1-1 (WBA Champ)
3. **HASSINE CHERIFI** — France 25-2-1 (WBC Champ)
4. **OTIS GRANT** — Canada 31-1-1
5. **KEITH HOLMES** — Washington, D.C. 30-2
6. **ANTWUN ECHOLS** — Davenport, IA 21-2-1
7. **ROBERT McCRACKEN** — England 31-0
8. **LONNIE BRADLEY** — New York, NY 26-0-1
9. **JULIO CESAR GREEN** — Brooklyn, NY 22-3
10. **RYAN RHODES** — England 17-1

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 154 pounds

1. **LAURENT BOUDOUANI**
   France *37-2-1 (WBA Champ)*
2. **YORY BOY CAMPAS**
   Mexico *71-2 (IBF Champ)*
3. **KEITH MULLINGS**
   Brooklyn, NY *16-4-1 (WBC Champ)*
4. **TERRY NORRIS**
   Mission Valley, CA *47-7*
5. **JULIO CESAR VASQUEZ**
   Argentina *60-3*
6. **WINKY WRIGHT**
   St. Petersburg, FL *38-1*
7. **BRONCO McKART**
   Monroe, MI *35-2*
8. **RAUL MARQUEZ**
   Houston, TX *28-1*
9. **TONY MARSHALL**
   Albany, NY *29-7-6*
10. **EMMETT LINTON**
    Tacoma, WA *25-2*

WELTERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 147 pounds

1. **OSCAR DE LA HOYA**
   Whittier, CA *28-0 (WBC Champ)*
2. **FELIX TRINIDAD**
   Puerto Rico *33-0 (IBF Champ)*
3. **PERNELL WHITAKER**
   Norfolk, VA *41-2-1*
4. **IKE QUARTEY**
   Ghana *34-0-1 (WBA Champ)*
5. **JOSE LUIS LOPEZ**
   Mexico *41-3-2*
6. **OBA CARR**
   Detroit, MI *46-2-1*
7. **VERNON FORREST**
   Atlanta, GA *24-0*
8. **WILFREDO RIVERA**
   Puerto Rico *28-3-1*
9. **DIOBELYS HURTADO**
   Miami, FL *26-1*
10. **JULIO CESAR CHAVEZ**
    Mexico *100-2-2*

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 140 pounds

1. **VINCE PHILLIPS**
   Las Vegas, NV *39-3 (IBF Champ)*
2. **KHALID RAHILOU**
   France *32-2 (WBA Champ)*
3. **MIGUEL ANGEL GONZALEZ**
   Mexico *43-1-1*
4. **KOSTYA TSZYU**
   Australia *20-1-1*
5. **RAFAEL RUELAS**
   Studio City, CA *52-3*
6. **HECTOR LOPEZ**
   Palmdale, CA *39-6-1*
7. **REGGIE GREEN**
   Clinton, MD *28-2*
8. **BOLILLO GONZALEZ**
   Mexico *48-3-1*
9. **ZAB JUDAH**
   Brooklyn, NY *17-0*
10. **SHARMBA MITCHELL**
    Takoma Park, MD *42-2*

LIGHTWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 135 pounds

1. **SHANE MOSLEY**
   Pomona, CA *28-0 (IBF Champ)*
2. **JEAN-BAPTISTE MENDY**
   France *51-7-2 (WBA Champ)*
3. **CESAR BAZAN**
   Mexico *32-2-1 (WBC Champ)*
4. **STEVE JOHNSTON**
   Denver, CO *24-1*
5. **ORZUBEK NAZAROV**
   Japan *26-1*
6. **PHILLIP HOLIDAY**
   South Africa *32-1*
7. **ARTURO GATTI**
   Jersey City, NJ *29-2*
8. **ISRAEL CARDONA**
   Hartford, CT *29-2*
9. **JAMES LEIJA**
   San Antonio, TX *36-3-2*
10. **ARTUR GRIGORIJAN**
    Uzbekistan *24-0*

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 130 pounds

1. **GENARO HERNANDEZ**
   Los Angeles, CA *38-1-1 (WBC Champ)*
2. **ANGEL MANFREDY**
   Gary, IN *24-2-1*
3. **YONG SOO CHOI**
   South Korea *24-2-1 (WBA Champ)*
4. **ROBERT GARCIA**
   Oxnard, CA *30-0 (IBF Champ)*
5. **JESUS CHAVEZ**
   Austin, TX *23-1*
6. **GABE RUELAS**
   Arleta, CA *45-4*
7. **GOYO VARGAS**
   Mexico *37-6-1*
8. **ANATOLY ALEXANDROV**
   Kazakhstan *33-3*
9. **JULIEN LORCY**
   France *38-1-2*
10. **ARNULFO CASTILLO**
    Mexico *27-0-2*

FEATHERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 126 pounds

1. **NASEEM HAMED**
   England *30-0*
2. **LUISITO ESPINOSA**
   Philippines *42-7 (WBC Champ)*
3. **FRED NORWOOD**
   St. Louis, MO *31-0-1 (WBA Champ)*
4. **DERRICK GAINER**
   Pensacola, FL *24-4*
5. **MANUEL MEDINA**
   Mexico *55-10 (IBF Champ)*
6. **JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ**
   Mexico *25-1*
7. **ANGEL VAZQUEZ**
   Hartford, CT *15-0*
8. **WILFREDO VAZQUEZ**
   Puerto Rico *50-8-3*
9. **HECTOR LIZARRAGA**
   Fresno, CA *34-9-5*
10. **CESAR SOTO**
    Mexico *51-7-2*

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 122 pounds

1. **VUYANI BUNGU**
   South Africa *35-2 (IBF Champ)*
2. **ERIK MORALES**
   Mexico *30-0 (WBC Champ)*
3. **KENNEDY McKINNEY**
   Memphis, TN *33-3-1*
4. **JUNIOR JONES**
   Brooklyn, NY *44-3*
5. **MARCO ANTONIO BARRERA**
   Mexico *45-2*
6. **WAYNE McCULLOUGH**
   Las Vegas, NV *22-1*
7. **ENRIQUE SANCHEZ**
   Mexico *24-0-1 (WBA Champ)*
8. **MBULELO BOTILE**
   South Africa *23-1*
9. **RAFAEL DEL VALLE**
   Puerto Rico *23-2-1*
10. **HECTOR ACERO-SANCHEZ**
    Brooklyn, NY *37-5-3*

BANTAMWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 118 pounds

1. **TIM AUSTIN**
   Cincinnati, OH *18-0-1 (IBF Champ)*
2. **NANA KONADU**
   Ghana *39-3 (WBA Champ)*
3. **JOICHIRO TATSUYOSHI**
   Japan *16-4-1 (WBC Champ)*
4. **JORGE ELIECER JULIO**
   Colombia *39-1*
5. **SIRIMONGKOL SINGMANASSUK**
   Thailand *16-1*
6. **PAULIE AYALA**
   Ft. Worth, TX *24-0*
7. **VEERAPHOL SAHAPROM**
   Thailand *15-1*
8. **DAORUNG C. SIRIWAT**
   Thailand *61-6-3*
9. **ADAN VARGAS**
   Mexico *28-1-1*
10. **DARIO AZUAGA**
    Paraguay *42-0-1*

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 115 pounds

1. **JOHNNY TAPIA**
   Albuquerque, NM *43-0-2 (IBF Champ)*
2. **GERRY PENALOSA**
   Philippines *39-1-2 (WBC Champ)*
3. **SATOSHI IIDA**
   Japan *25-1-1 (WBA Champ)*
4. **YOKTHAI SITHOAR**
   Thailand *14-1-1*
5. **HAROLD GREY**
   Colombia *22-2*
6. **LUIS BOLANO**
   Colombia *23-0*
7. **RATANACHAI DUTCHBOY GYM**
   Thailand *25-3*
8. **JULIO GAMBOA**
   Nicaragua *21-3*
9. **JOEL LUNA ZARATE**
   Mexico *32-2-2*
10. **VICTOR GODOY**
    Argentina *27-1*

FLYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 112 pounds

1. **MARK JOHNSON**
   Washington, D.C. *35-1 (IBF Champ)*
2. **CHATCHAI DUTCHBOY GYM**
   Thailand *33-1 (WBC Champ)*
3. **HUGO SOTO**
   Argentina *50-5-2 (WBA Champ)*
4. **JOSE BONILLA**
   Venezuela *24-4*
5. **CARLOS SALAZAR**
   Argentina *47-7-3*
6. **SAEN SOR PLOENCHIT**
   Thailand *29-1*
7. **ALEJANDRO MONTIEL**
   Mexico *37-3*
8. **DAVID GUERAULT**
   France *12-0*
9. **CHOKVIWAT CHOKCHAI**
   Thailand *30-3*
10. **JESPER JENSEN**
    Denmark *28-1*

JR. FLYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 108 pounds

1. **SAMAN SORJATURONG**
   Thailand *38-2-1 (WBC Champ)*
2. **PHICHITNOI C. SIRIWAT**
   Thailand *19-1 (WBA Champ)*
3. **MAURICIO PASTRANA**
   Colombia *18-0 (IBF Champ)*
4. **BABY JAKE MATLALA**
   South Africa *49-10-2*
5. **JUAN CORDOBA**
   Argentina *32-4-3*
6. **MELCHOR COB CASTRO**
   Mexico *51-5-4*
7. **JOMA GAMBOA**
   Philippines *24-3-1*
8. **MICHAEL CARBAJAL**
   Phoenix, AZ *45-4*
9. **TOMAS RIVERA**
   Mexico *14-3-2*
10. **OSVALDO GUERRERO**
    Mexico *24-3*

POUND-FOR-POUND

1. **OSCAR DE LA HOYA**
   Welterweight
2. **ROY JONES**
   Light Heavyweight
3. **EVANDER HOLYFIELD**
   Heavyweight
4. **FELIX TRINIDAD**
   Welterweight
5. **MARK JOHNSON**
   Flyweight
6. **PERNELL WHITAKER**
   Welterweight
7. **NASEEM HAMED**
   Featherweight
8. **JOHNNY TAPIA**
   Junior Bantamweight
9. **RICARDO LOPEZ**
   Strawweight
10. **BERNARD HOPKINS**
    Middleweight

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July 1984: Bazooka's Aim Is True: Gomez Shoots Down LaPorte In The Battle For San Juan. Plus: Michael Spinks, Vinny Pazienza, Tyrone Crawley, Leonard's comeback, Chandler-Sandoval, Hagler-Roldan.

Aug. 1984: Olympic Special: Mark Breland Leads A Strong Squad. Plus: Leonard-Howard, Davila-Sanchez, Bonecrusher-Bruno, Bramble-Mancini, Hatcher-Bumphus, Garza-Orozco.

Oct. 1984: The Beast From The East: John Mugabi Strikes Terror Into The Hearts Of Men. Plus: Olympics, Bill Costello, Davey Moore, Wilfred Benitez, King's heavyweights.

Dec. 1984: Hagler Hammers Hamsho. Plus: Barry McGuigan, boxing's best, James Broad, Julian Jackson, Pinklon Thomas.

Jan. 1985: Holmes-Bonecrusher Color Action. Plus: Gerry Cooney, pro debuts (Breland, Hill, Taylor, Biggs, Whitaker, Holyfield), Santos-Medal, Meza-Garza.

Feb. 1985: Showdown: Page Clobbers Coetzee For WBA Title. Plus: Larry Holmes, lightweights, Cooney-Chaplin, McCallum-Minchillo.

April 1985: Special Hagler-Hearns Program. Plus: British fighters, Hector Camacho, Donald Curry, Sonny Liston.

May 1985: The Rematch In Reno: Bramble-Mancini Color Action. Plus: Donald Curry, Aaron Pryor, McGuigan-LaPorte.

June 1985: Holmes' Last Hurrah? Holmes-Bey Color Action. Plus: Holmes vs. all-time greats, Paul-Arroyo, 1901.

July 1985: Marvelous Marvin! Are There Any More Mountains To Climb? Plus: Chavez, Tyson, Tubbs, Sullivan, great first rounds.

Aug. 1985: Seven Elected To The Ring Hall Of Fame (Jose Napoles, Jake LaMotta, Panama Al Brown, Manuel Ortiz, Young Stribling, Thomas Jackling, Lord Lonsdale). Plus: Spinks-Holmes preview, Barry McGuigan.

Sept. 1985: Barry McGuigan: Can He Be Boxing's Savior? Plus: Truth Williams, Tyrell Biggs, Greg Richardson, Julio Cesar Chavez, Paul-Blake, Witherspoon-Bonecrusher, Berbick-Bey, Pinklon Thomas.

Oct. 1985: The "Macho Man" Rides Again. Plus: Jeff Fenech, Berbick-Green, John E. Garcia, Dwight Muhammad Qawi, McCallum-Braxton.

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Jan. 1986: In Search Of A Heavyweight Champion. Plus: Azumah Nelson, Arguello-Jefferson, Olympic update, Chicago boxing.

March 1986 (Awards Issue): Co-Fighters Of The Year: Marvelous Marvin Hagler & Donald Curry. Plus: Ring's Annual Awards, Evander Holyfield, Williamson-Muhammad, Camacho-Roach, 1985 boxing diary.

April 1986: Witherspoon Tames Tubbs For WBA Title. Plus: Dream fights, Greg Haugen, Tyrell Biggs, Mark Breland, Paul Gonzales, HBO tourney, Witherspoon-Tubbs, Frank Warren, Gene Tunney.

May 1986: Marvelous Marvin Tames The Beast. Plus: Hearns-Shuler, Mike Tyson, Bramble-Crawley, Sandoval-Canizales, Marvin Johnson, McGuigan-Cabrera, Arguello-Costello, Weaver-Williams.

June 1986: Barry's Back In The USA: McGuigan Breathes A Breath Of Fresh Air Into American Fight Scene. Plus: Bobby Czyz, Robbie Sims, Qawi-Holyfield preview, Berbick-Thomas, Bruno-Coetzee.

July 1986: Spinks-Holmes II: Who Really Won? Plus: Frank Bruno, Richie Sandoval, Kevin Watts, Tyson-Tillis, Boza-Edwards-Alli, Johnson-Burns.

Aug. 1986: Is Sugar Ray Still Sweet? Plus: Lloyd Honeyghan, Tyson-Green, Cooney-Gregg, Hall of Fame (Eder Jofre, Benny Lynch, Bud Taylor, Sam McVey, Nat Langham, John Chambers), Bernardo Pinango.

Sept. 1986: Gerry Cooney vs. Mike Tyson: Who Would Win? Plus: Cruz-McGuigan, Hearns-Medal, Tyson-Gross, Sims-Duran.

Dec. 1986: The Weekend That Shook The Boxing World. Rosario-Bramble & Honeyghan-Curry. Plus: Butch Lewis interview, Buster Drayton, Hector Camacho, Jake LaMotta.

April 1987: Hagler-Leonard Souvenir Issue. Plus: Czyz, Orlando Canizales, Mugabi-Thomas, Biggs-Snipes, Chavez-LaPorte, Bonecrusher-Witherspoon II, Haugen-Paul.

May 1987: Mike Tyson: Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Year-end awards, *The Ring* annual ratings, Louie Espinoza, Herol Graham.

June 1987: Vinny Paz: Phenom Or Phony? Plus: Tyson-Bonecrusher, Mark Breland, Brian Mitchell, Holyfield, Czyz-Edwards, Olajide-Lee, Curry-Montgomery.

July 1987: Spinks-Cooney: The Fight That Refused To Die. Plus: The new *Ring* ratings, Terry Marsh, George Foreman's return, Khaosai Galaxy, Hearns-Andries, Whitaker-Mayweather.

Aug. 1987: Sugar Ray: Still In Style. Plus: Leonard-Hagler, all-time heavyweight ratings, Czyz-MacDonald, Camacho-Davis.

Sept. 1987: Michael Olajide: The Look Of The Future? Plus: Tyson-Thomas, Jeff Fenech, middleweight muddle, Tsuyoshi Hamada, Juan Roldan, Harold Knight.

Nov. 1987: Tyson Wins Heavyweight Triple Crown. Plus: McCallum-Curry, Carlos Monzon interview, triple champions, Orlin & Terry Norris, Ramirez-Alli, Fenech-Richardson, Matthew Hilton.

Dec. 1987: Spinks & Lewis: Boxing's Beastie Boys. Plus: Starling-Breland, Ramzi Hassan, Honeyghan-Hatcher, Holyfield-Ocasio.

Jan. 1988: Darrin Van Horn-Million Dollar Baby? Plus: Evander Holyfield, Hill-Stewart, Juan Coggi, great hookers, AIDS.

Feb. 1988: Gold Outshines Glitter: Tate Tops Olajide. Plus: Tyson-Biggs, Kalambay-Barkley, Hearns-Roldan, fights we'd like to see.

March 1988: Thomas "Hit Man" Hearns: "Now I Own History." Plus: Rocky Lockridge & Roger Mayweather, Panama, Tony Burton, Chavez-Rosario, Gervacio-Espinoza, Vaca-Honeyghan.

April 1988: Evander Holyfield: Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Special year-end awards, Holyfield-Qawi II, Foreman-Sekorski, Hill-Angulo.

May 1988: George Foreman: "I Can Beat Tyson." Plus: Tyson-Holmes, Jesse Benavides, Showtime, no-knockout artists.

Aug. 1988: Julio Cesar Chavez: The Kid From Culiacan. Plus: Holyfield, bad decisions, Lockridge-Knight, Starling-Breland II, Brown-Trice, Haugen-Santana.

Sept. 1988: Sugar Ray: Here He Comes Again! Plus: Andries-Czyz, Kid Chocolate, Don Dunphy, Don Lalonde.

Oct. 1988: Mike Tyson: What Price Glory? Plus: Tyson-Spinks, Hearns-Barkley, Davey Moore.

Nov. 1988: Donny Lalonde: "Sugar Ray is Out Of His Mind!" Plus: Hall of Fame selections (Carlos Ortiz, Joe Brown, Billy Graham, Cus D'Amato, Jimmy Jacobs), Nunn-Tate, Molinares-Starling, Honeyghan-Chung, '88 Olympians.

Jan. 1989: Meldrick Taylor: Philly Phenom. Plus: Marvin Hagler, Alex Wallau, Taylor-McGirt, Olympic results.

Feb. 1989: Julio Cesar Chavez. Plus: Chavez-Ramirez, all-time lightweight ratings, Louie Espinoza, Simon Brown, Roger Mayweather.

March 1989: Hearns Next For Sugar Ray? Plus: Leonard-Lalonde, Prince Charles Williams, Hearns-Kinchen, Nunn-Roldan, Hines-Hilton.

May 1989: The Best Of '88. Plus: Year-end awards, Evander Holyfield, Pryor-Morales, Fenech-Navarro.

Jan. 1990: Boxing's Bible Reborn At Age 68. Plus: Carlos Monzon, Mike Tyson, Leonard-Duran, Daniel Zaragoza, Nunn-Barkley, Whitaker-Ramirez, George Foreman (color).

Feb. 1990: Mike Tyson: Riddick Bowe & Ray Mercer Take Aim. Plus: Bobby Czyz, Gerry Cooney, Chuck Wepner, Antonio Esparragoza, Roman-Laciar.

March 1990: The '80s—Great Fights, Great Fighters (color). Plus: Jeff Harding, Evander Holyfield, Pete Rademacher, Sharkey-McCoy.

April 1990: Pernell Whitaker: Fighter Of The Year (color). Plus: Tiger Flowers, Duran-Leonard, Chavez-Taylor preview, Jorge Paez, Ali-Cooper.

May 1990: Big George Talks Tough: "Tyson Won't Be That Difficult!" Plus: Ed Hopson, Russian fighters, grudge wars, Archie Moore, Kid Berg, Marcel Cerdan, Chavez-Cortes.

June 1990: Buster! How James Douglas Shocked The World. Plus: Michael Moorer, Camacho-Paez, Tommy Farr, Excuses, Dick Tiger, Ruben Olivares-Jeff Chandler.

July 1990: "I'm Hungrier Than Ever Before," By Evander Holyfield. Plus: James Toney, Buddy McGirt, Glenwood Brown, Aaron Davis, Michael Carbajal, Jorge Paez, Kid Gavilan, Mark Breland, Ali-Liston II (color).

Aug. 1990: Chavez: His Greatness Confirmed ... Is He The Best Mexican Fighter Ever? Plus: Matthew Saad Muhammad, John L. Sullivan & Mike Tyson, Michael Nunn, Mark Breland, Harold Johnson, Cus D'Amato, Louis-Godoy (color).

Sept. 1990: Marvin Hagler-Can He Resist The Irresistible Temptation? Plus: Thomas Hearns, Sanchez-Saddler, Paul Banke, puncher vs. chin, Beau Jack, Robinson-LaMotta (color).

Oct. 1990: Rocky Graziano—Thanks For The Memories. Plus: Aaron Pryor, Junior Jones, Mike Tyson, Chris Eubank, Wolgast-Nelson, Hall of Fame.

Nov. 1990: Tyson vs. Foreman. Can Iron Mike Stop The Blast From The Past? Plus: Bruce Seldon, best chins, Sullivan-Kilrain (color), Azumah Nelson, LaStarza.

Dec. 1990: Exclusive Annual Report: The State Of The Game. Plus: Douglas-Holyfield preview, Julio Cesar Chavez, Joe Grim, Whitaker-Nazario, Rosi-Van Horn, Benny Leonard, Douglas-Tyson (color).

Jan. 1991: Boxing's Baddest Bad Boy: Nigel Benn Plays By His Own Rules. Plus: Roberto Duran, Kid Akeem, Jose Napoles, Jimmy Carruthers, LaMotta-Zale, Dempsey-Willard (color).

Feb. 1991: Boxing On TV—Now You'll Pay! Plus: Ismael Laguna, Tommy Morrison in *Rocky V*, Reggie Tuur, Chiquita Gonzalez, Harold Green, Joe Louis.

March 1991: Hunger! It Made Evander A Champ, But ... Plus: Dempsey-Firpo, Charles Murray, Khaosai Galaxy, Nunn-Curry, Henry Armstrong, Sonny Liston (color).

April 1991: Julio Cesar Chavez—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Tyson-Stewart, James Leija, Wilfred Benitez, Pedro Decima, Moore-Bassey.

May 1991: Ali-Frazier I: 20 Years Late, Still The Fight Of The Century (color). Plus: fighting at home, Mark McPherson, George Costner, Rolando Pascua, Tony Canzoneri.

June 1991: Pain, Frustration, Confidence, And Hope: Meldrick Taylor's Life After Chavez. Plus: Foreman-Holyfield preview, Norris-Leonard, David Kamau, Freddie Steele, Bennie Briscoe, Leonard's career (color).

July 1991: Tyson's Title Hopes: He Ain't What He Used To Be...But It's Not Gonna Matter. Plus: Eusebio Pedroza, Myung Woo Yuh, Willie Meehan, Hearns-Hill preview, computer junior welterweight tournament, Gomez-Fenech, controversial heavyweight finishes (color).

Aug. 1991: Foreman Gives Holyfield A Fight ... And The World A Thrill (color). Plus: Making weight, Harry Greb, Kevin Kelley, Louis-Conn I, Simon Brown-Blocker, Chavez-Duplessis, Sugar Ray Robinson.

Oct. 1991: A Hit Again-How Far Can Thomas Hearns Go? Plus: Battling Levinsky, Oba Carr, Dave McAuley, Muhammad Ali, Lou Ambers, Luther McCarty, ethnic matchups, computer light heavy tournament, Cerdan-Hagler, Rocky Marciano (color).

Nov. 1991: Mike Tyson's Fight For Greatness—Will November 8 Be His Moment? Plus: Edwin Rosario, Jeff Fenech, overrated/underrated, Giardello-Graham, Lennox Lewis, Marcel Cerdan, Leonard-Hearns I, heavyweight computer tournament, Ali portrait (color).

Dec. 1991: Evander Holyfield vs. Mike Tyson: Who Will Win And Why. Plus: Eddie Aliano, Jack Britton, Muhammad Ali, Pernell Whitaker, rating the 44 world champions, Marcel Cerdan, Henry Cooper, Ezzard Charles-Jersey Joe Walcott (color).

Jan. 1992: Our Exclusive Annual Report: The State Of The Game. Plus: Jerry Quarry, Julio Cesar Chavez, Mysterious Billy Smith, Joey Gamache, moving up in weight, Billy Conn-Michael Spinks, Joe Louis (color).

May 1992: James Toney—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Myung Woo Yuh, Khaosai Galaxy, Rocky Graziano, Billy Soose, Roy Jones, James Warring, Duran-Chavez, Marvin Hagler (color).

June 1992: What Now? Boxing Without Mike Tyson. Plus: Buck Smith, Liston-Foreman, Billy Graham, Holmes-Mercer, Enrique Pinder, Hilario Zapata, Toney-Tiberi, Benny Lynch, Tony DeMarco, Tyson centerfold (color).

July 1992: Does Larry Holmes Deserve A Title Shot? Plus: Nelson-Fenech II, Tracy Patterson, Kelley-Dorsey, fat fighters, Buchanan-Camacho, Holmes-Ali (color).

Aug. 1992: Holyfield-Holmes Prefight. Holmes: "I See Me Takin' Holyfield Outta There." Plus: Iran Barkley, Herbie Hide, George Foreman, Tex Cobb, Carnival of Champions, Harry Greb, Haugen-Mancini, Oscar De La Hoya, Gene Tunney (color).

Sept. 1992: Chavez: Unbeaten At 80-0, But What If He Had To Face These Guys? Plus: Bobby Czyz, Genaro Hernandez, Norris-Taylor, Tommy Gibbons, Sugar Ray Leonard's career, Sugar Ray Robinson (color).

Oct. 1992: The Supreme Dream: The Heavyweight Hopes Of The Heavyweight Hopefuls. Plus: Kevin Kelley, All-Time Top 10: South Africa, Meldrick Taylor, Sharmba Mitchell, Bob Foster, Eder Jofre, Max Baer (color).

Nov. 1992: Is Riddick Bowe The Next Heavyweight Champion? Plus: Morrison-Hipp, Canizales-Chandler, Chavez-Camacho preview, Australia Best of Nation, Tyson speaks from prison, Corbett-Sullivan (color), Tracy Patterson, Pat Barrett, Knockout Brown.

Feb. 1993: America's Tribute To The Brown Bomber: Joe Louis. Plus: Virgil Hill, Junior Jones, Roger Mayweather, Chicago boxing, Orlando Zulueta, Jose Napoles (color).

March 1993: From Question Man To Answer Man: Riddick Bowe Leaves No Doubts. Plus: Lennox Lewis, Lopez-Gamache, Frank Bruno, Rocky Kansas, Frank Fletcher, Crisanto Espana, Bowe-Lewis (color).

April 1993: Riddick Bowe: Fighter Of The Year. Plus: "Grand Slam" fight card, Toney-Barkley preview, Morris East, Joe Louis-John Henry Lewis, All-Time Top 10: Argentina, Fighters of the Year (color).

May 1993: Oscar De La Hoya's Sprint To The Title: Is He Good Enough *Now?* Plus: Carbajal-Gonzalez preview, Lennox Lewis, THE RING Poll, Freddie Pendleton.

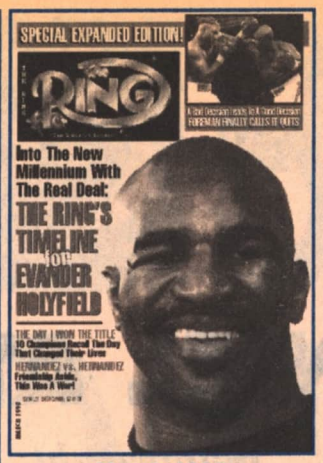
Aug. 1993: A Ring Exclusive: Julio Cesar Chavez Speaks Out. Plus: Bobby Czyz, 10 hardest punchers, Rafael Ruelas, Carmen Basilio, closing of the Fifth Street Gym, Sugar Ray Leonard (color).

Oct. 1993: Tommy Morrison: Good Enough To Beat Big George, But Will He Win The Heavyweight Title? Plus: Riddick Bowe, Mike Capriano, Billy Conn-Joe Louis, All-Time Top 10: Puerto Rico, Charles Murray.

April 1994: Michael Carbajal: Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Brown-Norris, Kevin Kelley, Ceferino Garcia, Oscar De La Hoya, Tunney Hunsaker, Spinks-Foster.

May 1994 (92-Page Special) Division-By-Division: The Greatest Fighters Of All-Time. Plus: Virgil Hill & Orlando Canizales, Kostya Tszyu, James Toney, What If ... Dempsey vs. Wills.

Aug. 1994: Bowe's Back! Determined To Do It Again. Plus: Eric Griffin, Pernell Whitaker, Ray



March 1998

Mercer, Roger Donoghue, State of the Game (midterm report), All-Time Top 10: The Philippines.

Oct. 1994: Rating The Champs: Whitaker & Toney Lead The Field ... But Roy Jones Is Closing Fast. Plus: Oscar De La Hoya, Meldrick Taylor, Rafael Ruelas, Curtis Cokes.

Nov. 1994: With Lewis Fighting Bowe ... Is Michael Moorer's Career Off-Target? Plus: Wayne McCullough, Hall of Fame, Alejandro Lavorante, Rocky Marciano, Paz-Duran, Injuries (part I), What If ... Pedroza vs. Sanchez.

Dec. 1994: Fighting-Mad! James Toney Just Wants To Beat People Up. Plus: Duran & Robinson, Don King, Mike McCallum, Injuries (part II), Tom Molineaux.

Jan. 1995: A Puncher's Dream: Oliver McCall Upsets Boxing's Balance Of Power. Plus: Ruelas brothers, Quincy Taylor, "Unfinished Business," Dave Maier, All-Time Top 10: Canada.

May 1995: The State Of The Game. Plus: Olzubek & Arbachakov, Gonzalez-Kelley, Pazienza-Duran II, All-Time Top 10: France.

June 1995: (92-Page Special): Foreman Frowns Upon The Age Gap: "I Don't Think Tyson Should Fight Anyone But Me." Plus: Least deserving heavyweight challengers, Carlos Monzon, Kostya Tszyu.

July 1995: Pernell Whitaker: *The Ring* Makes "Pound-For-Pound" An Official Title. Plus: Riddick Bowe, Ike Quartey, Benn-McClellan, TV prospects, Hector Acero-Sanchez, Harry Matthews, What If ... Robinson-Burley.

Aug. 1995: Can Tyson Go From Great To All-Time Great? Plus: Antonio Barrera, Collins-Eubanks, Johnny Paychek, McCall-Holmes.

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Nov. 1995: A 6-1 Favorite vs. Any Champion: Maybe They Should Just Give Tyson The Title. Plus: Roy Jones, Riddick Bowe, Ancee Gedeon, Hall of Fame, LaMar Clark, All-Time Top 10: Italy, What If ... Saad Muhammad-Scott.

Dec. 1995: McNeeley Goes Too Soon—Mike Tyson: The Beast Is Yet To Come. Plus: Tommy Morrison, Naseem Hamed, Chiquita Gonzalez, Gaspar Ortega, best chins.

Winter 1995 (92-Page Special): Buster Mathis Jr.: "Mike Tyson, You Got A Fight Comin' On." Plus: Holyfield-Bowe III preview, Wayne McCullough, Jesse James Hughes, Norris-Vaden preview, *The Ring* Insiders' Poll, What If ... Moore-Ayala Jr.

Feb. 1996: Bowe's The Man (For Now), But Is He Man Enough For Tyson? Also: Lennox Lewis, Hamed-Barrera, Paul Banke, Vince Phillips, boxing on Madison Ave., What If ... Leonard-Pryor.

April 1996: Oscar De La Hoya—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Mike Tyson, Gabe Ruelas, 1995 in review, All-Time Top 10: Africa.

May 1996: Exclusive Annual Report: The State Of The Game. Plus: Frankie Randall, Tim Witherspoon, Roy Jones, Bernard Hopkins.

June 1996 (92-Page Special): The Top 50 Fighters Of The Last 50 Years. Plus: Barrera-McKinney, Oscar De La Hoya, Internet, Decade To Remember (1940s): Jimmy Bivins.

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Sept. 1996: Lennox Lewis: Tough Enough For Tyson? Plus: Lewis-Mercer, Olympic team, Pernell Whitaker, Mark Johnson, Rocky, Scrapiron Johnson, heavyweight hopefuls.

Nov. 1996: Pole-Axed! Low Blows, Sinking Bowe, Ugly Show. Plus: Bowe-Golota I, Blinky Palermo, exciting fighters, Winky Wright, Joe Brown.

Dec. 1996: Our Spin On Roy Jones. Plus: heavyweight division, Olympic recap, Luis Rodriguez, Puerto Rican fighters, Danny Hodge, Saad Muhammad.

Jan. 1997: Riddick Bowe's Promise. "This Time I'm Whipping Golota's Ass!" Plus: David Reid, Whitaker-Rivera II, meaningless records, Dick Tiger, Jess Willard.

March 1997 (92-Page Special): Mike Tyson. Can He Reclaim His Greatness? Plus: 10 greatest controversies, Teddy Atlas & Michael Moorer, Kostya Tszyu, George Chuvalo.

May 1997: De La Hoya-Whitaker: Can "Sweet Pea" Stop Oscar's March To Greatness? Plus: Fitzsimmons-Corbett, Junior Jones, Phillip Holiday, Don King, Zaragoza-McCullough.

June 1997 (Special Collector's Issue): Holyfield-Tyson II: What It Means For Now ... And Forever. Plus: Holyfield-Tyson fight poster, Naseem Hamed, computer unification, Sayers-Heenan, state of the game.

July 1997: Leonard: There Wasn't Even A Ray Of Hope. Plus: Felix Trinidad, David Reid, Willie deWit & Shawn O'Sullivan, THE RING'S 75th anniversary, Moore-Durelle I.

Sept. 1997 (92-Page Special): Who's The Best? The Experts Make Their Pound-For-Pound Choice. Plus: Terry Norris, Junior Jones, George Foreman, greatest punchers, Tapia-Romero preview, Mark Tessman, Doc Anderson.

Oct. 1997: Bang! Naseem Hamed Takes Aim At America. Plus: Riddick Bowe, Phillips-Tszyu, Saman Sorjaturong, Bobby Dykes.

Nov. 1997: Mike Tyson: Is He Finished? Plus: Oscar De La Hoya, Ike Ibeabuchi, Hall of Fame weekend, mismatches.

Holiday 1997: Roy Jones: When He's Motivated, He's Unstoppable—Got That, Evander? Plus: Julio Cesar Green, Sugar Shane Mosley, boxers' day jobs, Tyson's mentor, Kid Lavigne.

Jan. 1998: Give This Man His Due! If You Can't Respect Oscar ... You Can't Respect Anyone! Plus: Sanchez-Mayweather, Morales-Zaragoza, Lucia Rijker, Marvin Johnson, characters.

Feb. 1998: Welter-Skelter! The Hottest Division In Boxing. Plus: Lewis-Golota, Olympic update, Art Shires, boxing I.Q.

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June 1998 (92-Page Special): The State Of The Game. Plus: Tyson-King, David Reid, Bernard Hopkins, Ken Norton.

July 1998: Holyfield ... Tapia ... Hamed ... Jones ... Trinidad ... De La Hoya: Who Will Be The First To Fall? Plus: Magic Johnson, Chavez-Gonzalez & Lopez-Alvarez, underappreciated boxers.

Aug. 1998: Lennox Lewis: No Holyfield, No Glory. Plus: Felix Trinidad, Pat & Mike McMurtry, Chris Byrd, unbreakable records, contenders & pretenders.

Sept. 1998 (92-Page Special): This Man's Not Unbeatable! Five Top Trainers Reveal How To Solve The Hamed Puzzle. Plus: John Tate, Freddie Norwood, Andrew Golota, Roy Jones, 12 greatest finishes.

Oct. 1998: Really Hard Punch ... Really Soft Lips: Oscar Makes Legs Quiver In And Out Of The Ring. Plus: Hector Camacho Jr., Mayweather-Hernandez preview, *Tuesday Night Fights.*

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NEW FACES

DANIEL ATTAH

Lightweight

By Joe Santoliquito

Daniel Attah could feel the tear streak down the side of his face in the stillness of the dark. He was just 12 years old and so uptight, the pressure gripped him like an eagle's talon. His trainer threatened that if he continued to lose at the national tournament level, he would not use him anymore. Lying face up in his bed, Attah felt consumed by the blankness surrounding him and began to do something he never did before. He began to pray.

Ever since winning the gold medal in that tourney, "The Prophet" has used prayer as part of his prefight preparation. Catch Attah before a bout, and he and his cornermen can be found on their knees, squeezed in amongst hotel beds or on the tile floor of a bathroom, absorbing Attah's brief sermon. The lightweight from Nigeria is a man of deep religious conviction, and he uses it to guide him in his quest for a world championship. After he's through with boxing, Attah says, he'd like to become a Pentecostal minister.

Prayer has provided the 20-year-old Attah with a confidence in the ring he feels is responsible for his 8-0 (5) start as a professional. The southpaw has a strong amateur past, advancing to the quarterfinals as a featherweight in the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta. He's a quick, deceptive boxer-puncher. Attah's manager, Cleveland Burgess, who has been associated with the fighter since the Olympics, feels Attah has the skill and ability to win at least an intermediate title by this time next year, and possibly something bigger.

Kendrick Utuk, a native of Nigeria, men-

(Continued on page 59)

PRO RECORD

1996		
Nov. 20	Moe Rites, Arbutus, MD	KO 2
1997		
Feb. 1	Nelson Figueroa, Washington, D.C.	KO 1
April 11	Miguel Figueroa, Philadelphia	W 6
Sept. 1	Elvis Ortiz, Newark, NJ	W 4
Sept. 20	Dave Thomas, Philadelphia	KO 2
Oct. 6	Michael Sparks, Washington, D.C.	KO 1
Oct. 17	Fidelio Morel, Philadelphia	KO 3
Nov. 14	Adam Salas, Philadelphia	No-Contest 2
1998		
June 27	Brian Adams, Philadelphia	W 4

FIGHTS	WON	LOST	DREW	NO-CONTEST	KOs
9	8	0	0	1	5

Attah looks for an opening on his way to handing fellow prospect Brian Adams his first loss

Photos by Frank Vitucci

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RYAN OUT LOUD

By Jeff Ryan

THE SOUNDTRACK

We God-fearing fight fanatics believe there's a special place in heaven reserved just for us. When we reach the Pearly Gates one day, St. Peter will find our name on the list and summon two beautiful brunettes to escort us to our ringside seats in a building that looks suspiciously like the St. Nicholas Arena (we'll know it's indeed the place when St. Nicholas himself shows up). We'll summon our own personal beer vendor who charges nothing and asks for no tip, and then settle in for a main event of Jack Johnson-Joe Louis with Marcel Cerdan-Carlos Monzon on the undercard.

Wait a second. Maybe that's *your* idea of boxing heaven. Mine is a little different. In my version, St. Peter has two beautiful blondes escort me to the most comfortable couch in the clouds, hand me a remote control that is incapable of locating UPN or the WB Network, and instruct me how to tune into NPPV (that's no-pay-per-view) for a card headed up by Henry Armstrong-Salvador Sanchez and broadcast by none other than Howard Cosell.

And if Cosell was working the *Monday Night Football* game between George Halas' 1933 Chicago Bears and Curly Lambeau's 1944 Green Bay Packers, and was thus unavailable at ringside? In that case, heaven would be an EternityVision telecast of Rocky Marciano-Sonny Liston live from the Polo Grounds with the inimitable Don Dunphy at the microphone.

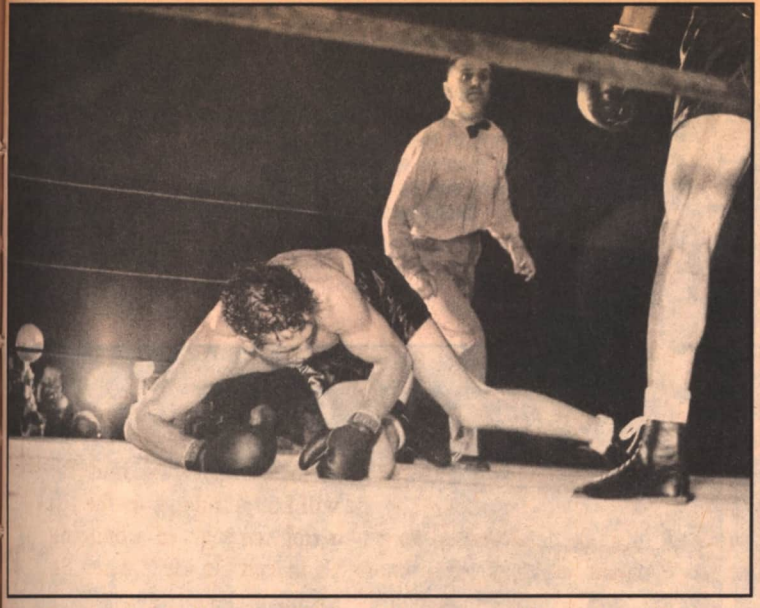
Dunphy, "The Voice Of Boxing"

"Good evening, everyone. I'm Don Dunphy, your ringside commentator."

Dunphy, the man whose unmistakable voice provided the soundtrack for the Sweet Science during its heyday of the '40s, '50s, and '60s, died on July 22, just a few days after turning 90. During a fistic career that began with the first Joe Louis-Billy Conn fight, in 1941, and continued into the '80s, Dunphy broadcast over 2,000 fights on radio and television, including roughly 200 title bouts.

He called Muhammad Ali's first TV fight as a pro, vs. Alonzo Johnson in 1961, and his last, against Trevor Berbick in 1981. And 23 others in between. Dunphy also hosted the *Gillette Cavalcade Of Sports*, ABC's *Fight Of The Week*, and the ABC program *Fight Talk*, during which he and legendary sportswriter Red Smith discussed the boxing scene.

"Conn blocks a left hook. He's reeling around the ring. Louis hooks a left and a right to the jaw, and Conn is down from a right cross to the jaw. He's taking the count ... four ... five ... six ... seven ... he's on his back ... eight ... nine. He's getting up at the



Dunphy's first fight broadcast: "Conn is down from a right cross to the jaw."

count ... no ... the referee says it's all over."

Dunphy had parts in movies ranging from Woody Allen's *Bananas* to Martin Scorsese's *Raging Bull*. Some people might be surprised to learn that in 1952 Dunphy did play-by-play for the National Women's Professional Baseball League game of the week. And that he covered track and field, college basketball's NIT Tournament, and much more. Boxing, however, is the sport with which Dunphy will forever be associated.

"I don't think Walcott can get up! It's going to be a knockout for Marciano! A straight right-hand punch to the jaw, and Walcott rolls over. He is still out cold."

Radio. Television. Closed-circuit. Eastern Parkway Arena. Queensboro Arena. Caesars Palace. Louis. Ali. Leonard. Dunphy's career extended through all of them. On countless black-and-white fight films, there are four ever-present sounds: leather hitting flesh, a crowd murmuring and cheering, a bell sounding, and the voice of Dunphy describing the action. Describing it clearly and concisely, painting a word picture on radio without faking enthusiasm or trying to manufacture excitement. And providing insight on television without telling the audience what it just saw.

The skinny Irishman called fights alone, as did Cosell. It's the way boxing is supposed to be broadcast, and if you ever doubt that, try arguing with the work those two guys produced. For my money, Cosell was the best ever, with Dunphy a close second. You say it's the other way around? Fine. In any case, the matchup is like the Whitaker-De La Hoya fight. One point either way, with some people thinking it's a draw.

The glaring difference between Dunphy and Cosell is in the kind of person each man was. Cosell was pompous, bombastic, and egomaniacal, with a condescending streak the length of I-95. Dunphy was the very picture of class and dignity. The fight game never soiled his clothing. He had no enemies, and though he was proud of all he had accomplished, he never talked about it unless asked. Cosell lived loudly, Dunphy quietly. Cosell died embittered, Dunphy died content.

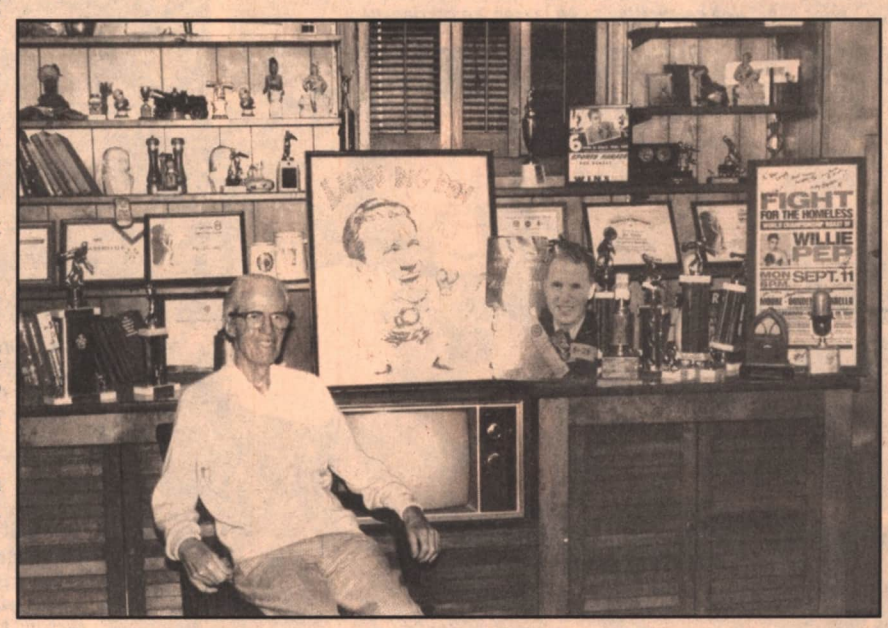
At the time of his passing, Dunphy hadn't worked a fight in years, but that was probably for the best, for he will always be associated with the great moments in ring history, not '90s fiascos like Mike Tyson chomping an ear or Rock Newman starting a riot or Oliver McCall having a breakdown.

"Frazier brings up a left hook to the mouth. He digs a left hook to the body, a left hook to the jaw. Ellis is hurt. There's another left hook to the head. Ellis goes down in his own corner. He's flat on his face."

Though I can't say I knew Dunphy well, we spoke occasionally over the past 14 years. He was always charming and helpful, he had an incredible memory, and could be quite opinionated. Dunphy had incredible respect for people—especially those putting their butts on the line in a roped square—and an appreciation for the opportunities he'd gotten. He'd be the first person to tell you that he was as lucky as he was talented. He'd also be wrong.

Several years ago, I conducted a lengthy interview with Dunphy at his beautiful Long Island home. His words are preserved forever in the November 1990 issue of *KO (and reprinted on page 68 of this magazine)*. More lasting for me, though, will be the memory of the tour he gave me of the grand collection of memorabilia in his basement. Old Gillette advertisements featuring his likeness, cartoons, photos of legendary champions, gloves, a microphone, and numerous autographed items. And there was Dunphy standing proudly among all of it.

A true treasure among treasures. ■



Dunphy with his collection of boxing memories

CAMERA CLICKS

Photo by Teddy Blackburn

Art imitates life, and life is there to hold art: Don King, pleased about being acquitted of insurance fraud charges, proudly shows off a sketch of his own celebration as he leaves the courthouse.

The El Paso winds turned the usually well-groomed Jim Lampley into a mop-top and made Larry Merchant look disheveled and distraught, but Roy Jones didn't seem to mind the breeze when the HBO trio worked the Oscar De La Hoya-Patrick Charpentier fight. This was one situation where less definitely was more.

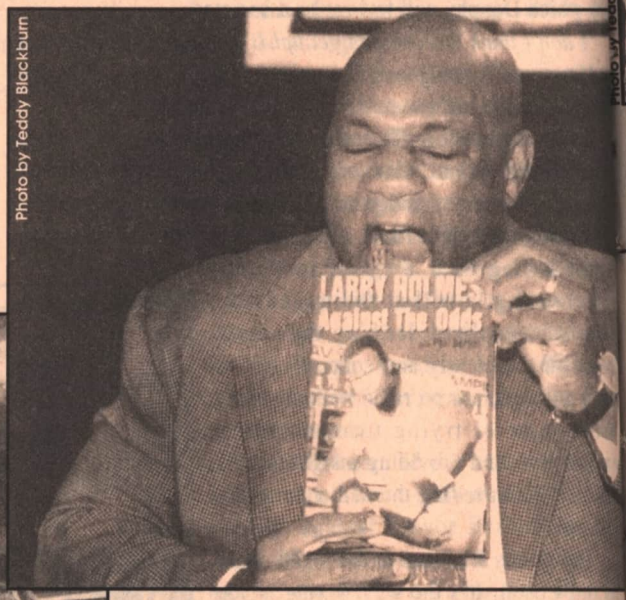


Photo by Teddy Blackburn

We wonder what George Foreman thinks of Larry Holmes' new book. "Against The Odds" would be a better way to describe Big George's claim that he can get down to 230 pounds for the fight next January.

Photo by Teddy Blackburn

WBC champ Lennox Lewis has said repeatedly that he'd like to steak his claim to the undisputed heavyweight championship, but he hasn't been able to convince Evander Holyfield to meat him in the ring yet. Lewis has a beef with the WBA/IBF champ after "The Real Deal" recently turned down a $20-million offer to face the Brit.

Photo by Pat Orr

A pair of champions share an intimate moment: We're not quite sure what pose former welterweight titlist Mark Breland and former heavyweight champ Ken Norton meant to strike here, but they ended up virtually lip-locked for an instant at this year's Hall of Fame induction weekend.

Roy the boy toy? Jones was surrounded by ladies—including several musicians and MTV personalities—at a promotional gig in New York City in July. Though Jones' shirt said "Ruff Ryders," the champ was looking plenty smooth at this moment.

NOSTALGIA CORNER

Photo by Arcadio Castro Jr.

Just what the world needed, another Hector Camacho. "The Macho Man" and his fighting son, Hector Jr., pose before a June fight for the younger Camacho in Kissimmee, Florida.

Former light heavyweight champion Jose Torres wanted to be tuned up for his 1967 rematch with Dick Tiger in every way possible, but he was unable to find the key to victory. Just as he had in December of the previous year, the Puerto Rican great lost a 15-round decision to Tiger.

The RING UPDATE:

TEOFILO STEVENSON

The Best Interview 50 Bucks And A Bottle Of Rum Could Buy!

By Bill Iezzi

Cuba's Teofilo Stevenson, the most feared amateur heavyweight champion of his time, is a contradiction, much like the communist/capitalist country in which he lives. On the isolated island, where money madness and Marxism coexist uneasily, Stevenson adds to the quandary with his palms down/palms up reaction to the cash cows who call on him from across the sea.

In this case, it was palms up, as the three-time Olympic boxing gold medalist asked for chump change to be interviewed. It had been palms down throughout the 1970s and '80s, when American promoters reportedly offered the legendary fighter millions of dollars to turn professional. Palms up when an American TV star gave him money for his autograph earlier this year.

Fidel Castro's most famous supporter, who says money is not important to him, asked for $50 to be interviewed for this article inside his Havana home recently. And it wasn't because he's broke. The government takes good care of its prized possession. The 46-year-old ex-Olympic boxing champion, who looks like a younger, healthier version of Muhammad Ali, lives well in a country in which food is in short supply, fuel, medicine, and clothing are limited, unemployment is high, and wages are low. He has an important job, lives in a nice home with his wife and children, changes his car every three years, and travels the island and the world. He's also four years younger than George Foreman, who's about to earn millions to fight another grandfather, Larry Holmes. So it's not out of the question to assume that Cuba's most celebrated athlete could command megabucks to unretire and turn pro.

So why was he nickel-and-diming a visiting journalist from the United States?

Stevenson at the height of his fame in 1986 (left), celebrates a victory over Alex Garcia in Reno, Nevada. Today, retired from the ring, the great Cuban heavyweight lives in Havana with his family: wife Fraymaris, son David, and daughter Helmys (above).

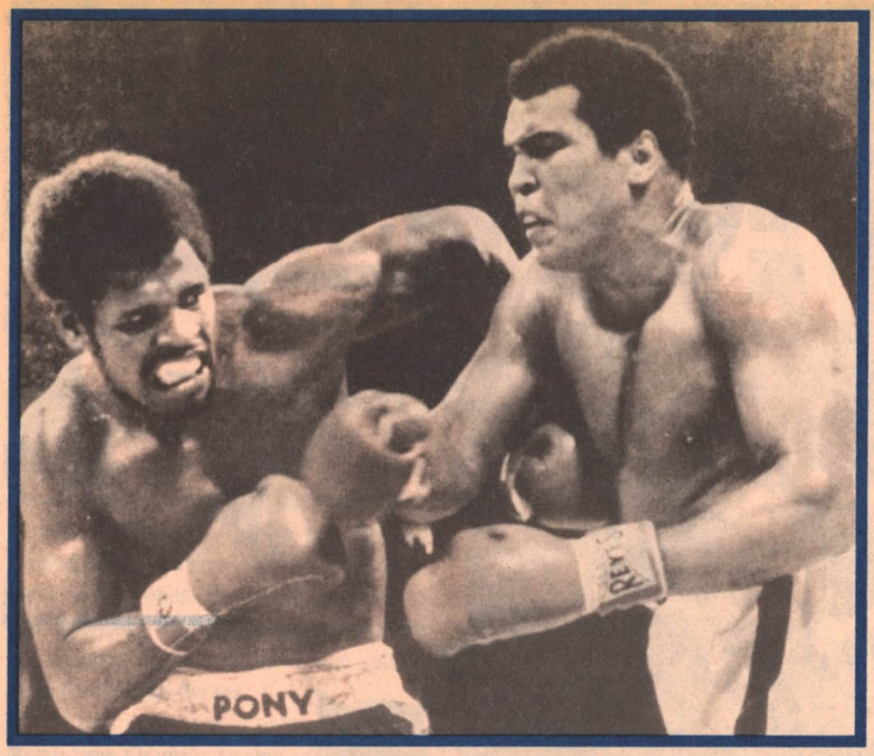
"Why you keep asking me the same question, man?" the hero of Havana said as he sat in his living room with his wife, Fraymaris, and two friends. "Can't you see I'm drunk?" he added, rocking his head between two massive hands.

Although other Cubans, responsible professionals in journalism and sports, had warned me about Stevenson's fondness for rum, I didn't expect to find the country's greatest sports celebrity drunk at home on a Monday night in late June, when Wilmer Morales, my Cuban driver, Bob Augelli, an amateur photographer from Kansas, and I stopped by the house for an unannounced visit. We were happy to be admitted without notice, although it wasn't as though the Stevensons didn't know anything about us. Fraymaris had called my Vedado, Cuba, residence twice, earlier that day, after learning from venerable Cuban boxing writer Elio Menendez that I wanted to interview her husband that evening for THE RING.

Augelli was overjoyed about the prospect of photographing a world-famous athlete he admired. Morales maintained his poise, and I was bursting with questions for the only man besides Hungary's Laszlo Papp to win three successive Olympic gold medals in boxing.

Could he have won a fourth gold medal? Did he have any regrets about not fighting Muhammad Ali or not turning pro? How would he have done against the top professional fighters of his time? Would pro sports ever return to Cuba? How did he feel about Cuban athletes who defect to the U.S. and become millionaires? About Team Freedom, a group of 11 boxers who escaped from the Caribbean island to turn professional? About the embargo? Mike Tyson and Evander Holyfield? There was so much to talk about.

The gate of the six-foot, green, chain-link fence guarding the Stevenson home was padlocked when we arrived at 10:05 p.m. on June 22. However, unlike two previous daytime visits, signs of life abounded from the single, two-story, beige-and-white house. A large white van was parked in the driveway to the left of the open front door, through which an attractive young



According to Cuban journalists and boxing insiders, there was a series of attempts to match Stevenson with Muhammad Ali. The closest they ever came to actually fighting was shortly after Ali regained the heavyweight title from Leon Spinks (pictured) in 1978.

Photos by Bill Iezzi

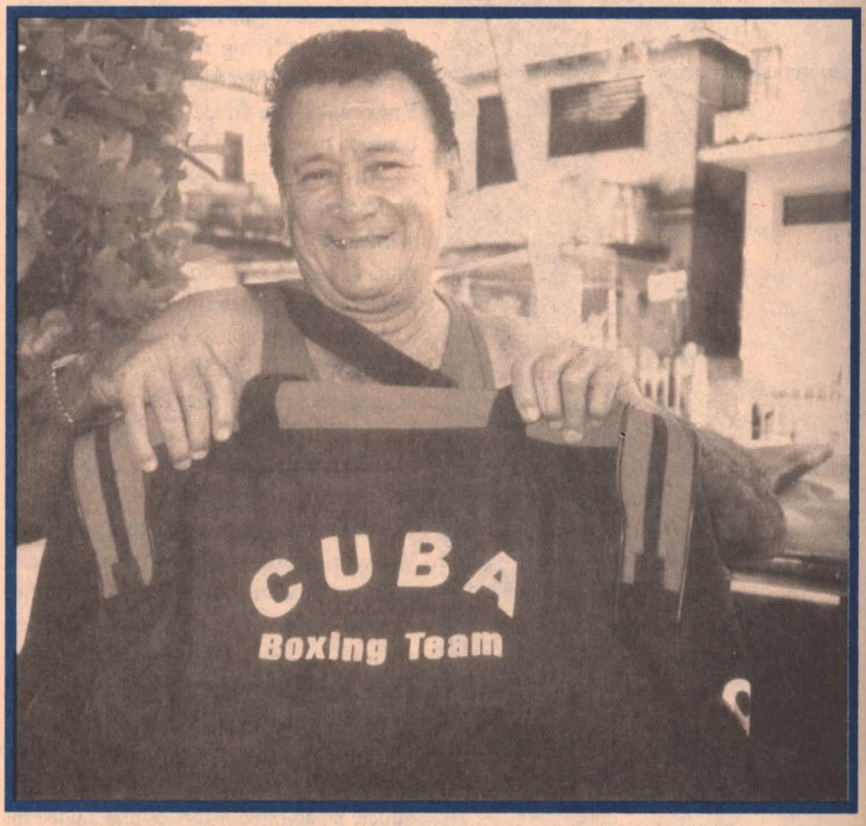
Cuban sports writer Elio Menendez (above), who broke the story about a proposed series between Ali and Stevenson, and Waldo Santiago (below), the former president of the Cuban Boxing Federation, who claims Fidel Castro had a hand in negotiating the contract.

woman, a small boy, and a teenage girl could be seen. The woman, Fraymaris, a 26-year-old lawyer, opened the gate and escorted us into the habitation, which seemed to be nicer than other dwellings on the block in a neighborhood called Reparto Nautico.

Walking into the West Havana home of a legend was a thrill—that quickly turned into a chill. Stevenson, a glassy-eyed giant, filled all but an inch of the 6'6" doorway between the kitchen and the living room. He was bare-chested, and his long, blue, jogging pants sagged at the waist, exposing black, jockey-type underwear. He wasn't obese at 224 pounds (he'd fought at around 211), but his long stomach curved downward like a snowless ski slope in the dead of winter. Biceps, where hard muscles had been, were now loose chunks of flesh, and one of them was instrumental in hoisting a clear, six-ounce glass of a colorless substance.

Conspicuous by its absence was jewelry. Unlike other famous Cuban athletes who've traveled the world, the big man wore no gold chains around his neck, no gold bracelets on his wrists. He was the no-frills, generic brand of Cubano, born seven years before the Revolution and a Castro man through and through.

As I handed him my tribute, a bottle of good Cuban rum, I realized how inappropriate a gift it was at that moment.



Stevenson accepted the present matter-of-factly, as though bottles of rum were given to him regularly, and quickly made it clear that he knew who I was, why I was there, and that everything would go well—for a price.

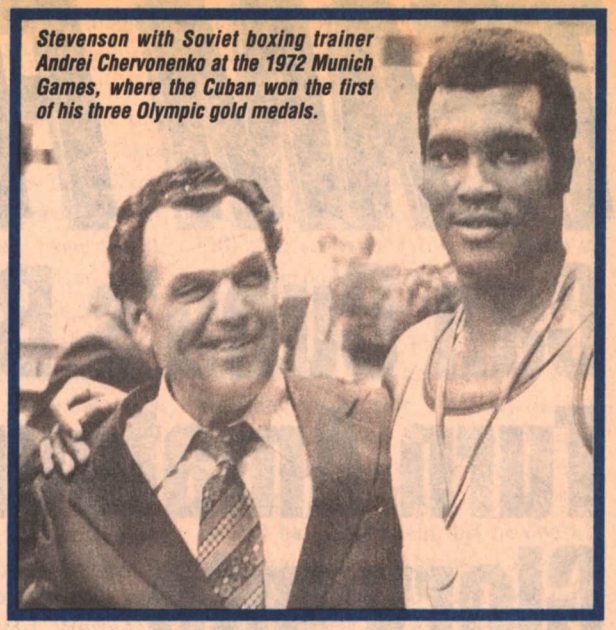
"You don't pay, you lose," Stevenson said in perfect English. He wouldn't stipulate a sum.

Augelli, who was giddy with delight over being in the presence of such a luminary, spoke with him in Spanish and then excitedly advised me to give Stevenson all of the greenbacks in my wallet. "He's broke and he needs the money,"Augelli said. Both men then disappeared into the kitchen while Morales and I sat in the living room, demoralized by the sight and sound of the surly celebrity.

The Pope Of Greenwich Village was playing on a color TV. Two magazines—*GQ*, the April '98 edition with a cover shot of Ali, and *Boxing Heroes And Champions*, with Holyfield on the cover—were on a nearby table. Inside the kitchen, Stevenson engaged in his hobby: cooking. He worked three pots as he stirred rice, beans, and chicken on a small gas range. Pots, pans, and dishes cluttered a nearby sink, and in this half-baked setting I confronted him about his attempt to capitalize on conversation.

He replied in testy English: "I'm not like these other Cubans who you can give $5 or $10 to. How many fights you win, man?"

Refusing to yield to his dinero-for-dialogue demand, I focused on photos. Augelli had no flash for his new Nikon, so Stevenson allowed his admirer to use the Cuban's own old Pentax to take a roll of 36 shots (none of which turned out). But first he wanted money. I pulled out $50, figuring that I could write something around the photos. He grabbed the cash, placed it on a high shelf, and the show began. Soon Augelli had Stevenson doing stupid pet tricks. Teofilo liberated a parrot from its kitchen cage, placed it atop his head, and smiled wryly. Then the star took a snapshot of the photographer standing next to a prized photo hanging alone on a living room wall. The color picture was of the boxer with his arms raised in victory. Next to him is a delighted Castro in his familiar army fatigues. The Commandante's arms are raised, too. His right hand is holding up the boxer's left, and his left hand is holding a cigar. The photo was taken after Stevenson won his first gold medal at the '72 Olympics in Munich. He won by default, after his Romanian opponent, Ion Alexe, was unable to compete due to an injury in the semifinals. However, the Cuban sensation had won all of his previous bouts by technical knockout.



Stevenson with Soviet boxing trainer Andrei Chervonenko at the 1972 Munich Games, where the Cuban won the first of his three Olympic gold medals.

In the sparsely furnished dining room, enlarged black-and-white action photos adorned three of the four white walls. One of the photographs was of Stevenson fighting John Tate in the '76 Olympics in Montreal. He won his second gold medal there after a string of technical knockouts, including Romanian Mircea Simon in the finals. The third *medalla oro* was earned in the '80 Olympics in Moscow, which Stevenson won with a 4-1 decision over the Soviet Union's Pyotr Zaev. The U.S. had boycotted those Olympics, as the Cubans did in '84 at Los Angeles and '88 at Seoul, South Korea.

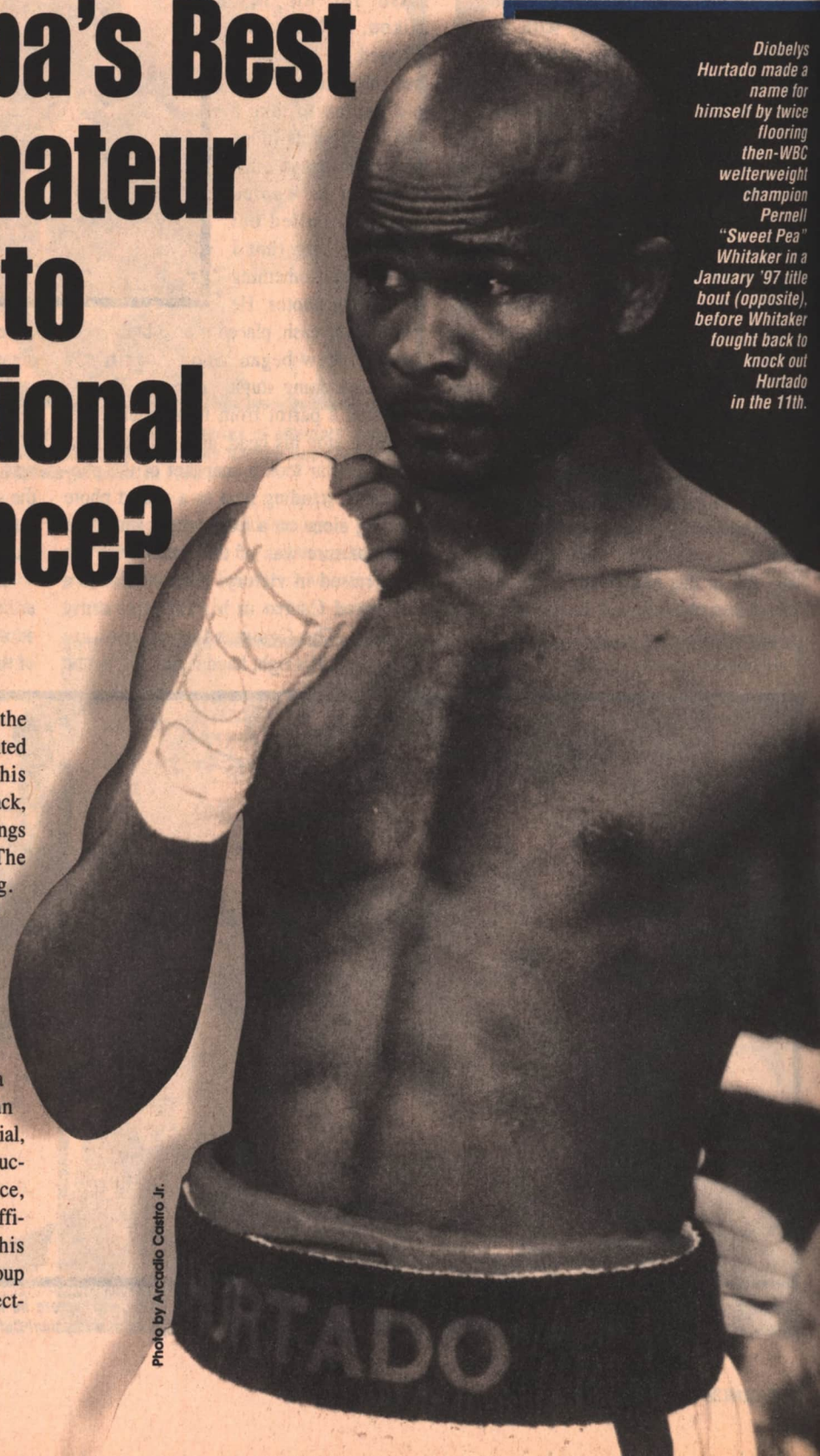
Cuba's failure to participate in those two Olympics, in which Stevenson might have won unprecedented fourth and fifth gold medals, was two-thirds of the reason he retired in July 1988, at age 36. (His record was 38-3 in major world

(Continued on page 60)

Stevenson, visiting Cuban school children in 1981, remains a national hero in his homeland, where he is vice president of the Cuban Boxing Federation and a member of the National Institute of Sports and Physical Culture.

TEAM FREEDOM

Can Cuba's Best Turn Amateur Glory Into Professional Excellence?



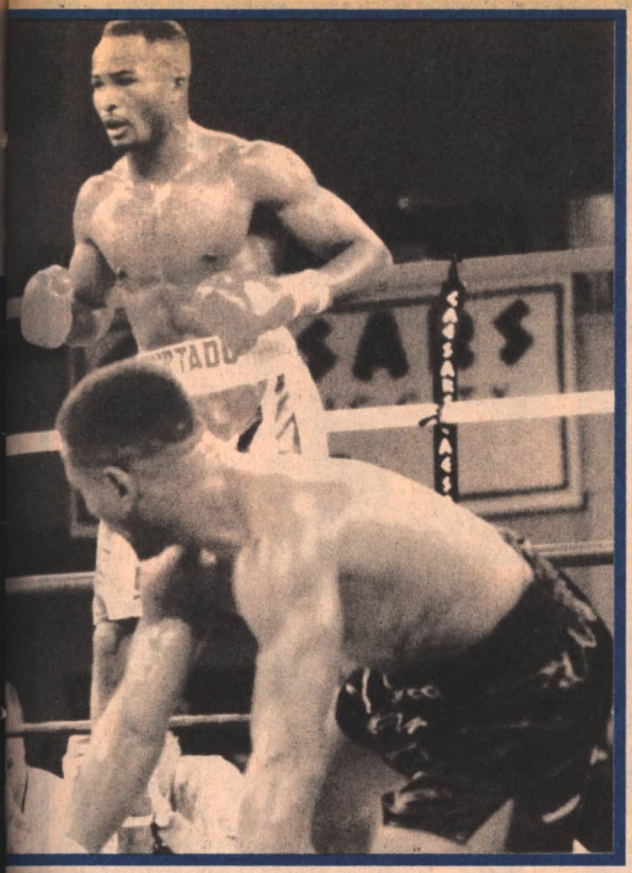
Diobelys Hurtado made a name for himself by twice flooring then-WBC welterweight champion Pernell "Sweet Pea" Whitaker in a January '97 title bout (opposite), before Whitaker fought back to knock out Hurtado in the 11th.

Photo by Arcadio Castro Jr.

By Joe Santoliquito

Diobelys Hurtado remembers the first day he arrived in the United States after defecting from his native Cuba in 1994. He took a step back, looked up at the sky and his surroundings in disbelief, and inhaled freedom. The fumes were sweet and invigorating. After an emotionally charged flight that tore him away from his family, friends, and the only existence he had known, a new untapped world lay in front of the former Cuban amateur champion.

In America, Hurtado, for once, had a chance to live his dream. He had an opportunity to reach his highest potential, without any limitations placed on his success by the government. Independence, however, did not come without new difficulties, as Hurtado and the rest of his teammates from Team Freedom—a group of fellow Cuban boxers who had defected—have discovered.



For Hurtado, his nemesis was trash cans. Every time Hurtado got behind the wheel of his brown Camaro, it turned into an adventure. When he'd take the wheel with the giddy playfulness of a child first learning how to walk, neighbors would hide their trash cans in fear they would crunch under Hurtado's embryonic driving skills.

Wrestling with the steering wheel was actually a relief compared to the hardships and perils experienced by Hurtado and Team Freedom in their quest to enter the United States. Their tales vary from boxer to boxer and have been well-documented. Some, like IBF junior lightweight contender Ramon Ledon, risked their lives making the trip to the United States in rubber rafts, staving off sharks and hunger. Others, like Hurtado, had it easier. Scheduled to depart out of Miami International Airport after an amateur fight, he simply walked away, seeking asylum.

Getting to the United States, Team Freedom has found, was half the battle. The other half is an ongoing process, as they adjust to a new culture, a new language, and a new way of life. In Cuba, they might not have had the freedom and economic opportunity available to Americans, but in a sense, they were considered athletic royalty. They were "taken care of" by Cuba, living in a compound provided by the government. Now, they find themselves adjusting to life in the United States as professional boxers, encumbered by what most Americans would consider mundane tasks—like driving.

"I recall picking Diobelys up the first day here in Miami," said Rene Gil, Hurtado's manager since he arrived in the United States. "I took him to a Cuban restaurant at 10 in the morning, and he ate half the restaurant. At night, he ate the other half. You have to understand, with these guys everything in Cuba was hard to come by. Hurtado had this look of disbelief that he can have all these things.

"Hurtado used to have this brown '83 Camaro that I bought him, and after three months, it looked like a piece of junk. He hit every garbage can in front of every house. He didn't know how to pump gas. Remember, Hurtado took the bus in Cuba crammed with 100, 200 people. When Hurtado got in the car, everyone ducked."

Hurtado and Ledon are probably the most talented of the group of 13 fighters, which also includes junior lightweight contender Joel Casamayor, 11-0 (8), cruiserweight Ramon Garbey, 11-0 (9), and heavyweight Eliecer Castillo, who slipped to 14-1 (10) after suffering a 10-round defeat to Chris Byrd on May 30 in Atlantic City.

"My observation is that the Cubans are just like us; some are motivated and work hard and have great ambition, and some are along for the ride," said Jay Searcy, boxing writer for *The Philadelphia Inquirer* who has documented Team Freedom's plight. "I think someone like Garbey has great talent, but he doesn't have great training habits. Generally speaking, the whole group is a very talented bunch. I think they have above-average ability, and I think we'll get a few world champions out of this group."

Hurtado, the first to defect to the United States, is probably the most accomplished on the team. He's chalked up a 25-1 (17) record, and twice knocked down then-WBC welterweight champion Pernell "Sweet Pea" Whitaker in a January '97 title bout, before a desperate Whitaker fought back to knock out Hurtado in the 11th round. Until Hurtado's courageous performance against Whitaker, Team Freedom had struggled to find an identity. Before then, the only semi-prominent Cuban pro was heavyweight Jorge Luis Gonzalez, who defected in Helsinki in 1991 after a wildly successful amateur career that included victories over Lennox

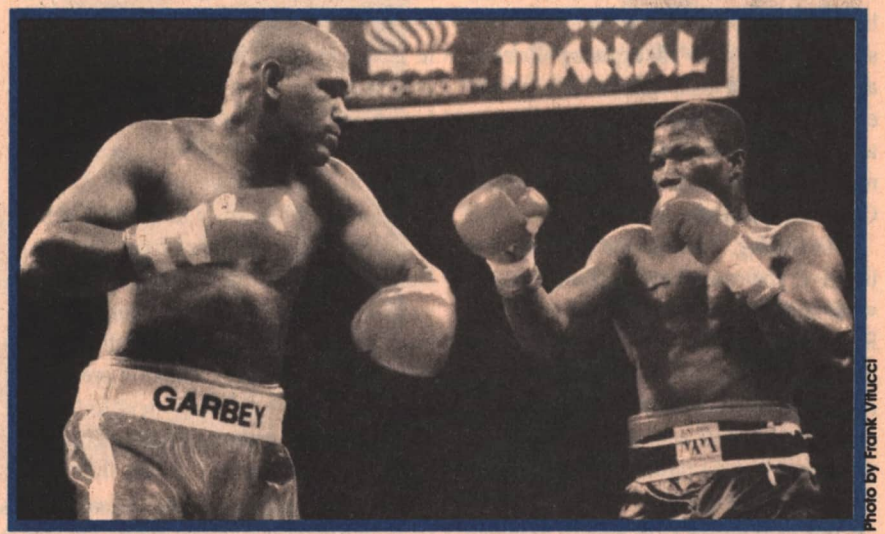
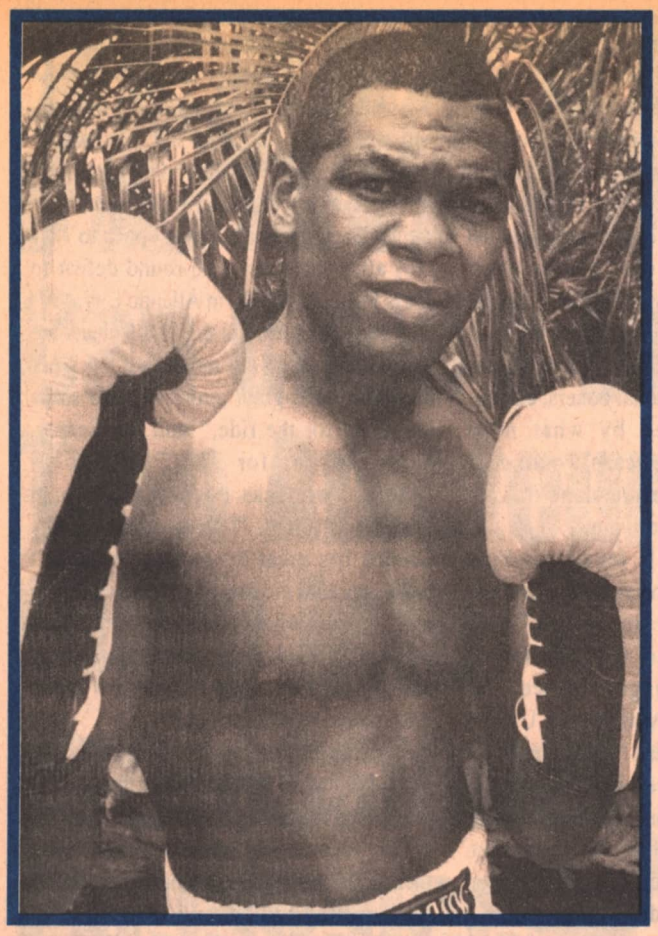


Photo by Frank Vitucci

Undefeated cruiserweight Ramon Garbey, seen here against Onebo Maxime in July, has been homesick since arriving in America. Garbey has talent, but his work ethic has been questioned.



Junior lightweight contender Ramon Ledon risked his life making the trip to the United States in a rubber raft. His journey has made him appreciate the freedom enjoyed by Americans.

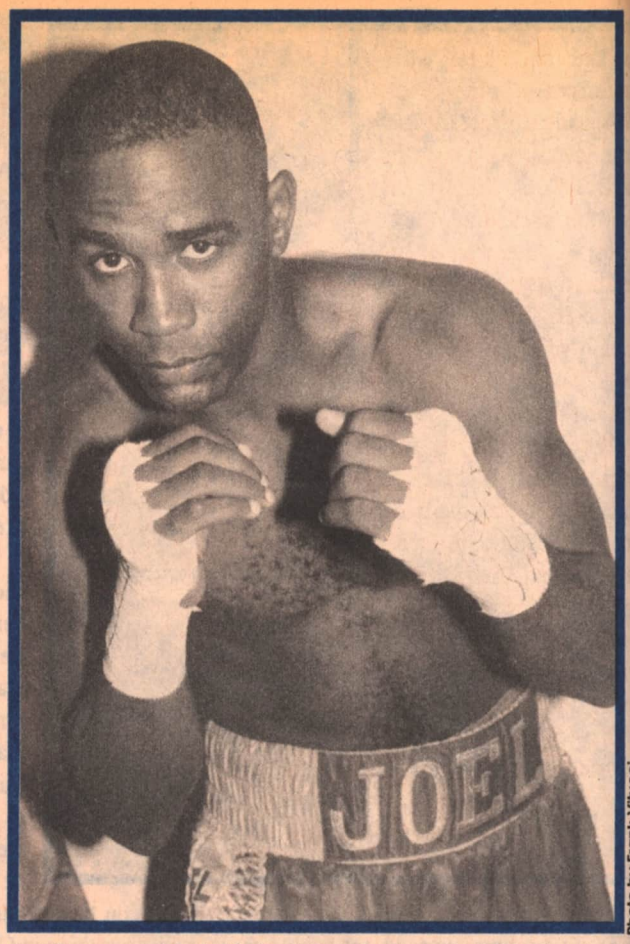


Photo by Frank Vitucci

Joel Casamayor defected to the U.S. just prior to the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta. A gold medalist in the 1992 Olympics in Barcelona, Casamayor fights at junior lightweight as a professional.

Lewis and Cuban legend Teofilo Stevenson.

Luis DeCubias, the president of Team Freedom, signed Gonzalez, a colorful, swaggering character who wore a scowl, smoked cigars, and badmouthed opponents and their wives. He ran his pro record to 23-0 (22) before Riddick Bowe took him apart for a sixth-round kayo in '95, exposing Gonzalez as an overhyped underachiever. Every fighter has undergone a transition period since arriving from Cuba. How long the adjustment takes depends on the individual. Gonzalez, apparently, never adjusted.

"In boxing, you see the glamour and the glitz; you can get a distorted opinion of what the United States is about," said Roger Haber, vice president of Team Freedom. "They're picked up by limos, after walking six miles each way [in Cuba] or being on a bus with 200 people. Until you learn how to adjust, that can throw things out of whack."

The inability of Gonzalez to make an impact at the pro level made many skeptical of the current crop of Cuban boxers. A frequently voiced opinion among boxing people was that while the Cubans were great amateurs, they left a lot to be desired as pros. Team Freedom knows it has to dispel this reputation and restore Cuban fighters to the lofty status they enjoyed before Fidel Castro abolished the pro game in 1959. Gil thinks it's close to happening, especially with the emergence of Hurtado, Ledon, and Germany-based Juan Carlos Gomez, the expatriate who became the first of the current wave of Cuban fighters to win a major title when he took the WBC cruiserweight belt away from Marcelo Dominguez in February '98.

"I think Hurtado changed that quite a bit in people's minds with the fight against Whitaker," Gil said. "Cuban's are great amateurs, that's the way people think. What would it take to change that? A world championship. I'm one that isn't afraid to speak my mind. I think these guys have two strikes against them: They're Cuban and they're black. But I give these guys credit. They're different from other people because they go about their business and they don't care what people say. Diobelys has times where he doubts what he's doing here and where he's going. He doubts whether it was all worth it because he wonders whether he'll ever get another chance to win a title. Pro boxing knows that Cuba produces great boxers, but the powers that be in boxing today aren't about to give these Cubans a full opportunity."

While that remains to be seen, these Cubans are certainly adjusting to American lifestyles. To a man, they say they have few regrets, but if Ledon, 12-0-1 (9), had to endure the journey again, he'd pass and stay in Cuba. The trip was torture. He saw death and survived—just barely. The experience gave him a greater appreciation for the freedom America provides, something often taken for granted by American-born citizens.

Ledon—who, hopes to challenge IBF junior lightweight champion Robert Garcia

this year—knows the exact day and time he left Cuba (midnight, September 4, 1994) and the exact day and time he was picked up by the U.S. Coast Guard in the Caribbean (9 p.m., September 6). After that, he was detained a year at Guantanamo Bay while his background was being investigated by the U.S. Immigration Department.

"For me, yes, it was tough, because I left behind all my family and my traditions, my culture, to face a new world which I didn't know anything about," said Ledon, an intelligent man with a degree in physical therapy. "The possibilities of never making it was huge. With a lot of praying, I made it. We were exposed to the weather, we had a very poor raft, the chances of making it were very, very narrow. I think something like this I'd do once in a lifetime. Once I came over and succeeded, I swore I'll never try that again. We were losing hope because we didn't have any water or food left. Yes, I definitely have an appreciation for freedom, because I know what it is to live like a slave."

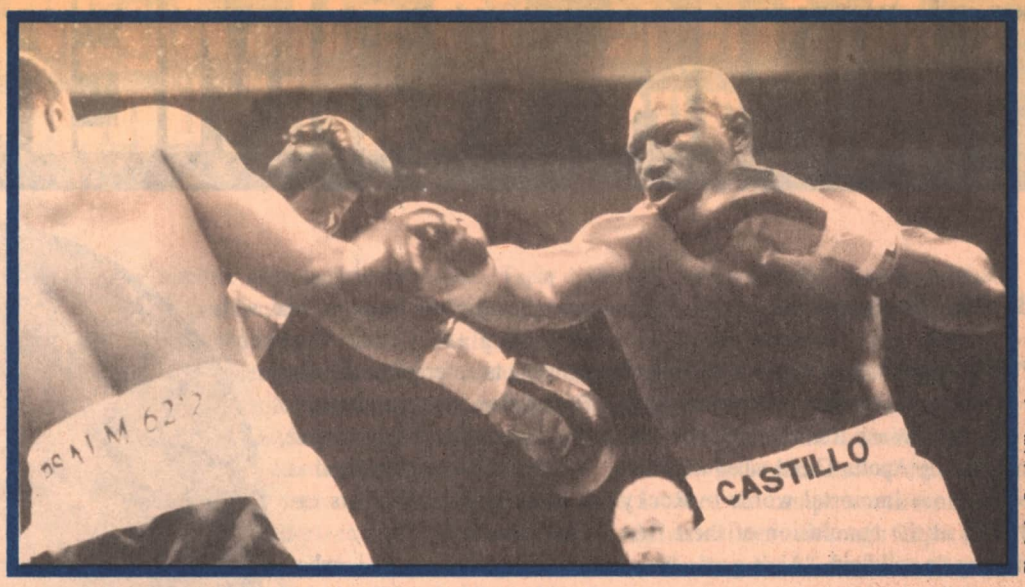


Photo by Frank Vitucci

Eliecer Castillo was undefeated until he met Chris Byrd in a May bout in Atlantic City. Castillo, like Ledon, made a successful jaunt across the Caribbean in a rubber raft surrounded by sharks.

The biggest—and for most, the only—regret is the absence of their families. They all fight with the dread of letting people down. They're finding they can't replace their families with hamburgers and cars. Hurtado did not even tell his family he was going to defect. He first got the idea while he was sitting in his mother's house, buried deep in the woods of Santiago, Cuba. *Look at me, I'm the best in the world and I'm staring at a dirt floor*, Hurtado thought to himself. When it rained, his mother's floor turned to mud, and Hurtado grew weary of the poverty. He had traveled the world as part of the Cuban national team, which exposed him to what he envisioned as a better life. But he was among nine brothers and sisters. There was his mother to worry about; who would watch over her?

If he told his family of his intentions, Hurtado felt they would have talked him out of it. Instead, he left without their knowledge. At first, he was called a traitor—by family and friends. It stung. In time, they came around to understand why he left his homeland.

"It's the hardest thing for me to deal with, being so far away from my family and dealing with a new system; not knowing if I'll ever see my family again," said Hurtado. "I don't know what day I'll see my family again, but the only regret I have is that I didn't make the decision to defect sooner. Cuba as a country I have no animosity toward. I don't like the system that has been created in Cuba. It was hard to deal with the fact I couldn't go out and get a steak when I wanted to. But I knew in the bottom of my heart, I knew I could make a name for myself as a professional."

Hurtado smiles more frequently these days. Yes, he still misses his family, but his mother has wood floors in her new brick house, provided through Hurtado's earnings, and just two years ago she was able to purchase electricity. Hurtado's pain is eased somewhat by knowing his family would have wanted what was best for him.

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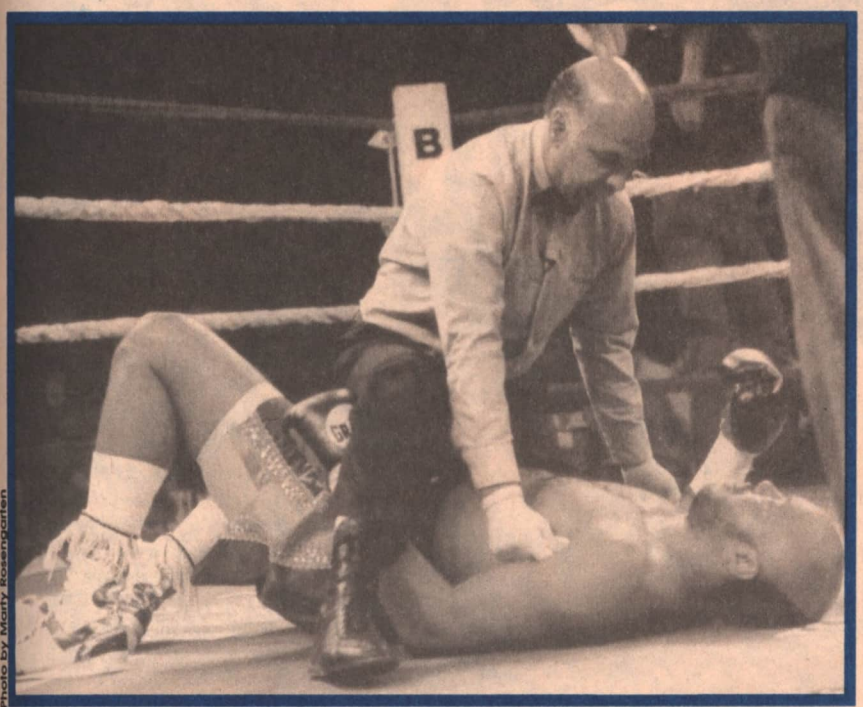


Photo by Marty Rosengarten

The inability of heavyweight Jorge Luis Gonzalez to make an impact at the pro level has made many skeptical of the current crop of Cuban boxers.

TAPIA-ROMERO II

Why It Might Be Different The Second Time Around

By D.E. Thomas

Taking Johnny Tapia at his word after last summer's victory over rival Danny Romero would be akin to believing Apollo Creed when he whispered those immortal words to Rocky Balboa at the conclusion of their first meeting on celluloid, "Ain't gonna be no rematch."

That was just about the sentiment Tapia expressed in a Las Vegas ring while celebrating his career-defining victory over Romero. No sooner than the unanimous decision in Tapia's favor had been announced, Tapia was asked if the 115-pound warriors from Albuquerque, New Mexico, would cross paths again.

"No rematch," Tapia said. "It was too easy. The best man won."

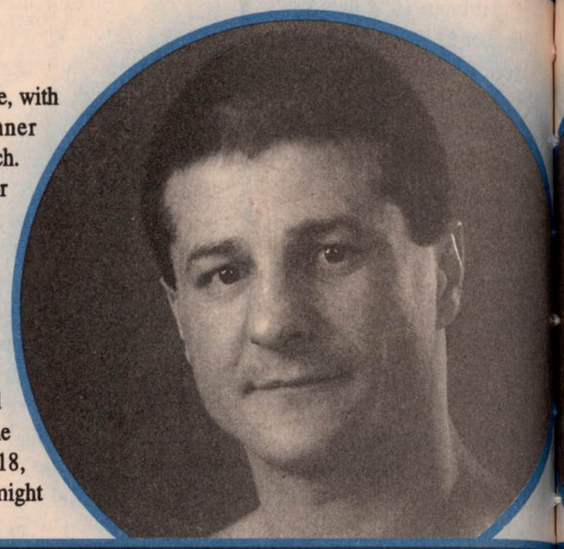
For his part, Romero had little to say. He and his father/trainer shunned the press after the fight, pausing only long enough to imply that the judges must have gotten the corners mixed up and scored the bout for the wrong man.

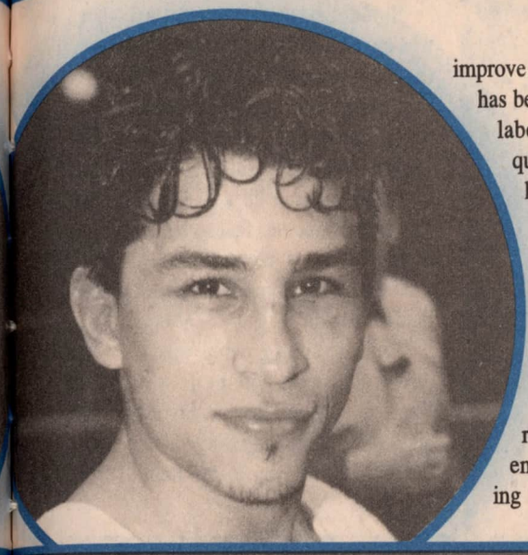
Of course, movie buffs everywhere know that there was a rematch between Balboa and Creed in *Rocky II*. The fictional heavyweights even clashed again in an unofficial rubber match for personal bragging rights at the end of the third installment of boxing's most famous cinematic series.

In this case, life imitates art. Tapia and Romero will indeed face off a second time. An agreement for a rematch has been reached, although negotiations of the final details had not been settled at press time. If Tapia truly believed what he said in the aftermath of the first match, then the lure of easy money has finally become too tempting to turn down.

The second act of the most ballyhooed and lucrative match in junior bantamweight history seems set for late-October or early-November, most likely in the hometown of both men. Tapia's IBF championship will be on the line, with Don King and Cedric Kushner agreeing to co-promote the match. Both fighters were preparing for final tuneup fights at press time, with the rematch to proceed as long as both combatants escape unharmed.

The question now is what could possibly be different this time around. Both Tapia and Romeo have had plenty of time to absorb the events of July 18, 1997, and consider how they might improve upon their performances. Tapia has been able to enjoy the fruits of his labor and proclaim himself Albuquerque's fistic king. Romero has had to live with the knowledge that he came up short in a bout that could have propelled him to superstardom, and with second-place status in the only town he has ever called home.





Neighborhood wars, whether fought by gangs on the street or rivals in the ring, are always emotional affairs. The first meeting between Tapia and Romero was no different, even though it took place on neutral turf. The rematch figures to be another hotly contested affair, perhaps even more so, as the obvious bad blood existing between the former amateur teammates has not diminished in the interim.

Exactly what is at the root of the hostilities between the camps has never been clearly articulated, although Tapia has hinted that Romero and his father, Danny Sr., turned their backs on him long ago. The Romero family returns the venom in kind. Whatever the reason behind the feud, it burns with a fire that needs no additional fuel. When Tapia tried to touch gloves and make up after the final bell of their first meeting, the Romero camp turned its collective back on him.

The contrast of styles and backgrounds is as intriguing now as it was the first time around. Tapia is an emotional firebrand from a troubled background that dates back to the brutal murder of his mother when he was a child, a former street urchin who came back from drug addiction and jail time to reclaim his glory in the ring. Romero is a boy-next-door type, a family-oriented youngster who has apparently lived the kind of life his squeaky-clean looks would suggest.

Only time will tell what will happen when they cross paths again, but it's a sure bet that boxing fans around the world, and in Albuquerque in particular, will tune in to see if the passing of a little more than a year will make a difference in the outcome.

PHYSICAL EQUIPMENT: Neither boxer has added much ring wear since they last shared the same ring, with both taking several months off before making their respective returns. Tapia was off for nearly five months before posting a decision over challenger Andy Agosto, while Romero took a four-month vacation before stopping Roberto Lopez in five rounds in his first post-Tapia outing. The new year didn't inspire either to new heights of

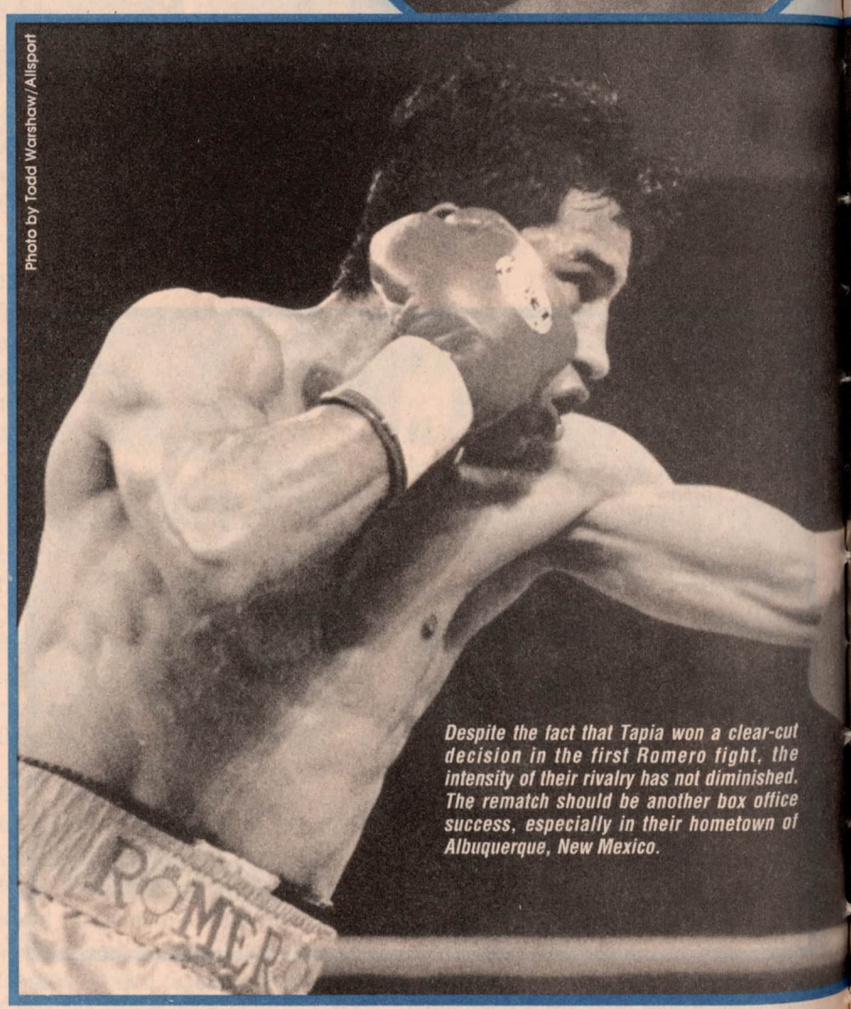
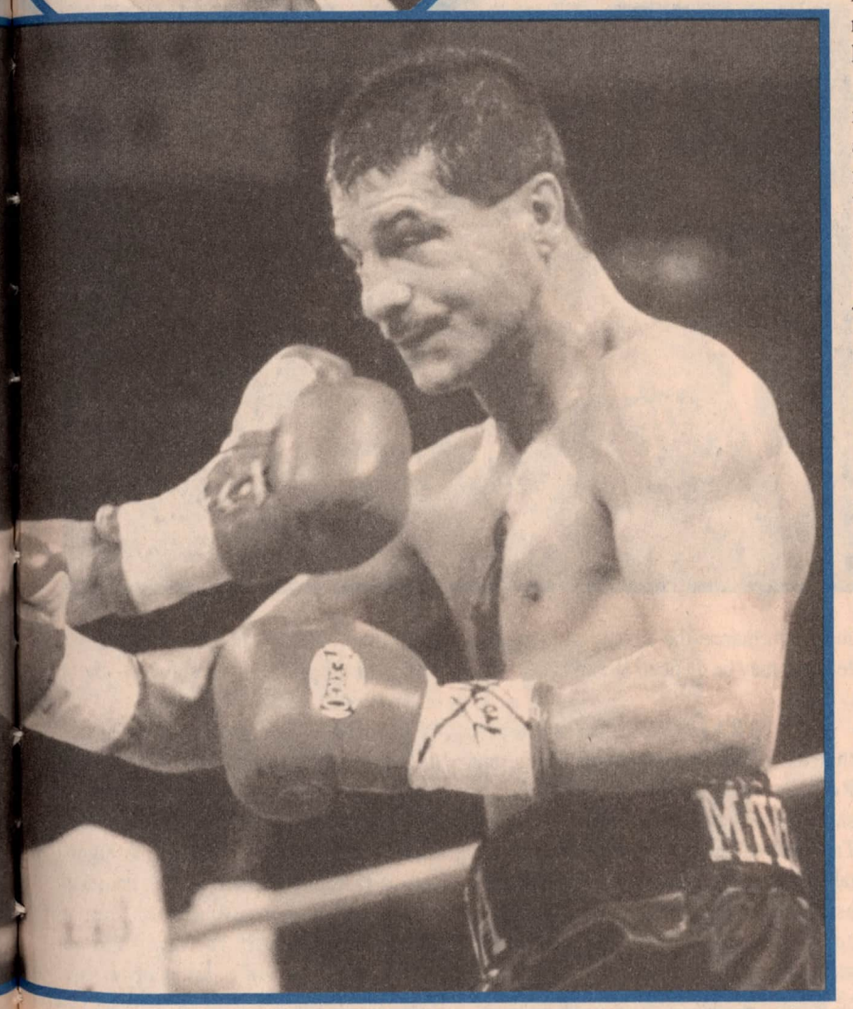
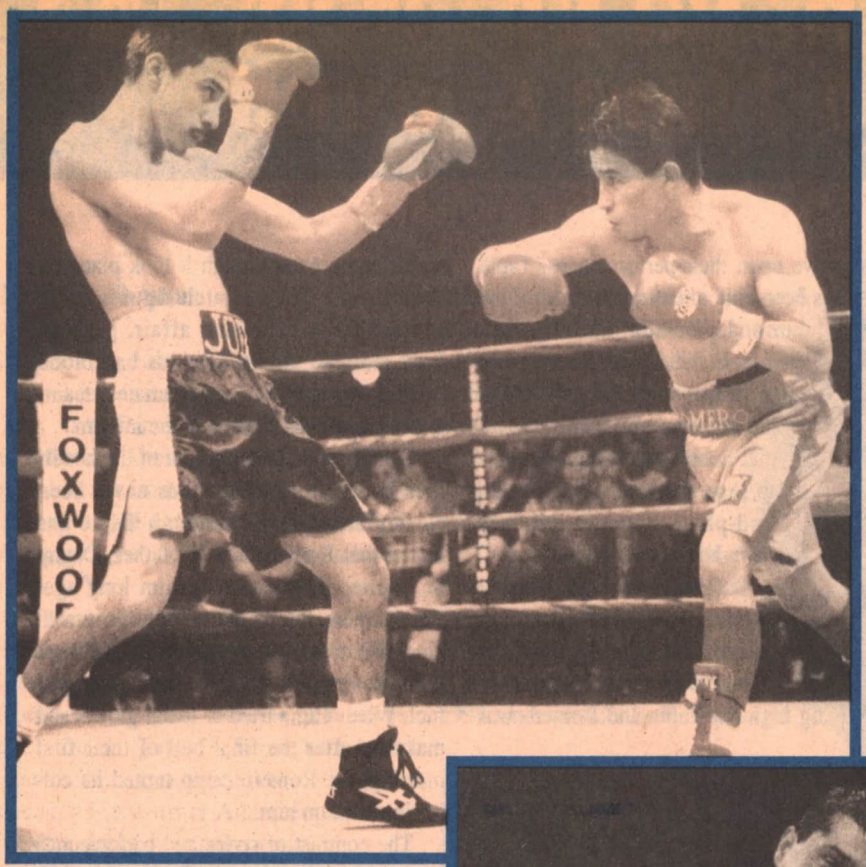
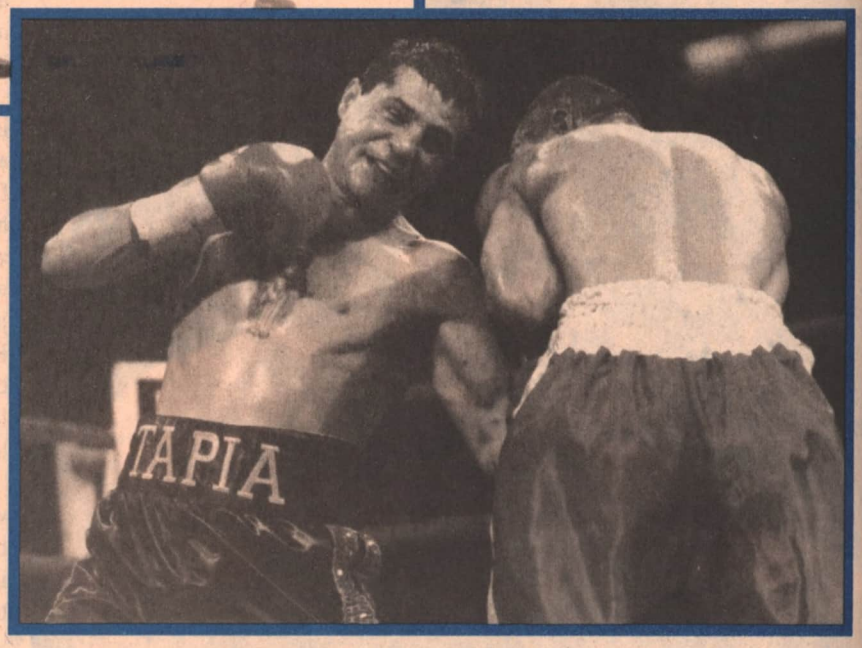


Photo by Todd Warshaw/Allsport

Despite the fact that Tapia won a clear-cut decision in the first Romero fight, the intensity of their rivalry has not diminished. The rematch should be another box office success, especially in their hometown of Albuquerque, New Mexico.







Although they've been winning, neither Romero nor Tapia have looked particularly sensational since their initial meeting. In his second post-Tapia bout, Romero struggled to a 10-round decision over clever Joe Manzano (above), while Tapia decisioned shopworn Rodolfo Blanco in his most recent title defense (right).

activity, giving the suggestion that both fighters were really biding time until arrangements could be made to get it on again.

In the big picture, however, Romero is still in his prime years, while Tapia is beginning to enter the age at which most lighter-weight fighters start to show decline. Romero is a young 24 years old, while Tapia is now a mature 31. The only other loss on the record of Romero, 33-2 (29), came in a bout where Willy Salazar closed his left eye and did damage to the socket that still causes concern every time he enters the ring. The undefeated Tapia, 43-0-2 (24), may have suffered as much physical damage from his out-of-the-ring bouts with cocaine abuse as he has between the ropes.

The question here is whether Tapia can again peak his reflexes and conditioning as he did for the initial encounter. He was totally on top of his game in a commanding performance the first time around, a feat that may be difficult to duplicate.

THE STRATEGIES: The expectation that the ill feelings between Tapia and Romero would erupt into a thrilling shootout was unfulfilled last year, when Tapia mixed speedy maneuvers and a brutal bodyattack to build an early lead before using his considerable boxing skills to coast to a points win. Romero never seemed to press the issue as many thought he would, but rather seemed content to box at a distance and rely on the basics.

"I had a game plan before the fight, and it was nothing about power punching," Romero said. "It was more about boxing. I done what I had to do, and I thought it was good enough."

Romero has since determined that he was too cautious, and promised to return to the more aggressive, powerpunching style that made him one of the game's most feared knockout artists. Just how much Tapia's ring generalship and natural defensive ability had to do with Romero's tepid approach is another factor. It will be interesting to see if he has the fortitude to exchange when he samples Tapia's offense firsthand again.

Tapia's training camp was a veritable three-ring circus for the first match. He fired trainer Jesse Reid in favor of venerable Eddie Futch, then invited Reid back in the days leading up to the bout. The turmoil didn't seem to faze the irrepressible Tapia, who managed to absorb the advice of both experts and put it to good use.

Just who will be in Tapia's corner this time around is anyone's guess. Teddy Atlas came to terms with the fighter recently, but left when he ran into a conflict with Tapia's wife and manager, Teresa. If Danny Romero Sr. can come up with a better game plan this time, it remains to be seen if Tapia will have a strategist capable of coming up with a proper counter-attack.

Tapia and Romero have always been a study in contrasts. Romero (above) has capitalized on his boy-next-door image, while Tapia (below) remains one of the most intense individuals in the game.

Tapia also carries the burden of trying to duplicate, or even improve upon, the best 12 rounds of his career, a task that may prove difficult. It should be noted, however, that Tapia is one of the most gifted boxers on the planet, with uncanny anticipation and the ability to adjust his game to the opposition.

THE MOTIVATION: Both fighters had everything to gain when they met the first time, but Tapia clearly has the most to lose this time around. Romero has nothing less than redemption to gain in the rematch.

Romero already carries the stigma of the first battle with him everywhere he goes, since there probably isn't a resident of Albuquerque who isn't familiar with what occurred last summer. Every time he fills his tank with gas, goes to the grocery store, or ventures out for a quiet walk, he has to feel the stares and whispers of his hometown fans. That kind of experience could drive him to train with even greater fervor. Only by conquering Tapia can Romero overcome those demons.

Tapia, on the other hand, knows little will change if he wins again. His reputation in New Mexico is already made, but fans can be fickle. A loss in a rematch will all but erase the first result in the eyes of his detractors. Only he knows if he can recapture the fervor that drove him to victory.

Tapia's dominance, however, has to still be fresh in the minds of both participants. Romero can't forget how easy Tapia made things look, a psychological advantage that the champion will seek to exploit. If he can get off to another fast start, Romero will have a difficult time keeping his confidence.

THE SETTING: The real wild card is the fight site. Though no announcement had been made at press time, the idea of this bout taking place anywhere else but Albuquerque is hard to imagine. The University of New Mexico's basketball arena can seat approximately 20,000 for boxing, and city officials made a last-ditch bid to make tax concessions to lure the first meeting away from Las Vegas.

A change of scenery could impact the outcome of the rematch. Tapia was able to

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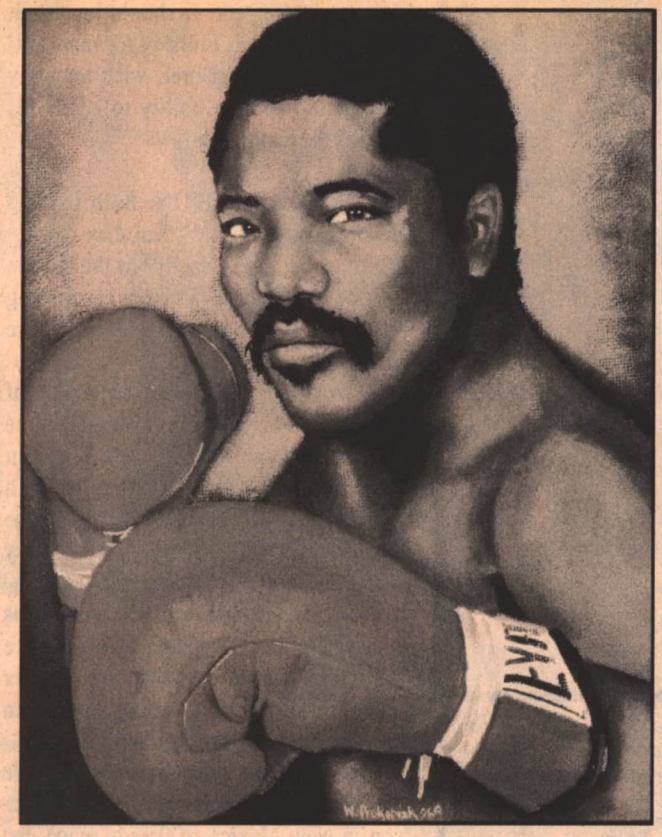
Legends of Boxing



Aaron Pryor

Card shown actual size. Biography and record printed on back.

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EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH OSCAR DE LA HOYA!

"I'm Always In A No-Win Situation"

WBC welterweight champion Oscar De La Hoya, who holds THE RING's belt as best pound-for-pound fighter in the world, last sat down for a no-holds-barred interview with us in January 1996, as he trained for his February 9 tuneup with Darryl Tyson. But the fight on his mind was his scheduled match against then-WBC super lightweight champion Julio Cesar Chavez the following June 7, when the younger, charismatic, American-born De La Hoya would seek Chavez' unofficial title as the greatest Hispanic fighter in the world.

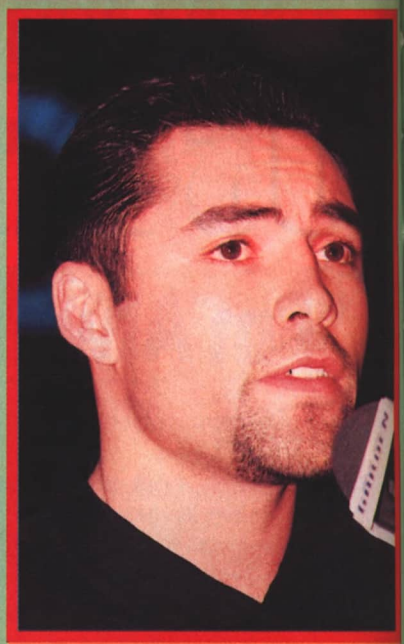
Appropriately, this latest interview was conducted before a rematch with Chavez, who lost the first one by fourth-round TKO. In this session, conducted in Las Vegas by THE RING's West Coast correspondent, Ivan Goldman, the still-undefeated De La Hoya revealed many of his inner thoughts.

Goldman reports: "In 1996, I viewed Oscar as an intelligent, personable, and extremely talented kid. He was certainly more than a prospect, but still a boxer with much to prove. This time I spoke with an accomplished man, confident and mature. There is no longer any doubt who captains Team De La Hoya—Oscar himself. Also, at age 25 he has grown into a full-fledged welterweight, a much more powerful physical presence.

"Before the interview, Top Rank officials, including Bob Arum, told me they had put solid offers on the table for De La Hoya to fight both IBF champ Felix Trinidad and WBA champ Ike Quartey for $8-million and $4.5-million, respectively. Of course those two camps say otherwise, and, as usual, it's never easy to sort out the claims and counter-claims in fight negotiations. But when I sat down with De La Hoya, and he told me how hard he was trying to put together these fights, how badly he wants to face these men in the ring, he looked me right in the eye. I have no doubt he was telling the truth."

Photo by Andy Bernstein/Courtesy of Top Rank

The one fight De La Hoya would like to fight over again is his bout with Pernell Whitaker. If they fight a rematch, "The Golden Boy" promises to be much more aggressive and stop "Sweet Pea".



"I have no idea why the rumor got started. But those rumors are not true. I have a good relationship with Bob Arum ... there's no plan to or idea of leaving Bob Arum."

THE RING: Your jab is one of the best in the business. Do you think it's still improving?

OSCAR DE LA HOYA: I think my jab has always been the key to my success inside the ring. I've always had a really good jab, actually. I've always used the jab to open the doors for the next combination—you know, right hand, left hook. The jab is the punch that will blind you, that will blind my opponent. He cannot see what's coming next. My jab is getting stronger and faster.

RING: Your critics used to say you're not for real until you beat Rafael Ruelas. When you defeated him, they said the same thing about Genaro Hernandez, then Chavez, and so on. And when you beat somebody easily, critics say the fighter must not have been that tough. Do you get the feeling they keep raising the bar?

DE LA HOYA: I'm always in a no-win situation. That's another reason why boxing is interesting, because you know you'll always have your critics. You always have people not wanting to believe. And that's another motivation there, too—to show the people that you want to be the best. But I feel that when I retire undefeated and a champion, then I'll still have people saying the same things they were telling me a few years ago.

De La Hoya doesn't blame Felix Trinidad for failing to fight him. He blames "Tito's" father, Felix Sr., who the WBC welterweight champion claims is the one responsible for holding up the superfight.

RING: There were some rumors a while ago that you might leave Arum to let Don King promote you. Any idea where this came from?

DE LA HOYA: I have no idea why the rumors started. I never talked to King. I've never had any relationship with King. I just have no idea why people will just keep on talking. I have a good relationship with Bob Arum. He takes care of me very well. Vice versa, you know. I take care of him very well, too. But those rumors are not true. In the future there's no plan or idea of leaving Bob Arum.

RING: If you had one fight to take back, which would it be and how would you fight it differently?

DE LA HOYA: Pernell Whitaker. No hesitation. I would fight him aggressive. When I was training with The Professor [Jesus Rivero], he taught me so much defense. And that's the only thing he taught me. Why did I fight Whitaker in a defensive mode? I have no idea. And so when I fought Whitaker, yeah, the

Photo by Jason Ross Lovin

The price of fame: De La Hoya is always happy to sign autographs for his fans, but complains that he "can't go anywhere and feel normal."

game plan was to fight him defensively because of The Professor. But when that wasn't working, my instincts just kicked in and I had to go out there and fight him. I basically didn't have a plan for myself up in that ring.

RING: That's bad.

DE LA HOYA: Oh yeah, it's very bad. That's the very first time that's ever happened to me. If I fight him again, yeah, I would just attack him, be very, very aggressive.

THE RING: Whitaker is tricky, though. That might not be the answer.

DE LA HOYA: He's very, very tricky. He does moves that you just don't see in the ring, that you're not used to. But being aggressive with him is something he cannot handle. Doing it smart. Not just going in and banging with him. You have to do it very, very smart. A lot of feinting, a lot of jabs. I have no doubt that if I fight him again I can knock him out.

RING: Who's the toughest welterweight out there for you?

DE LA HOYA: If they promote Trinidad right, if they promote Ike Quartey in the right way, if they promote Jose Luis Lopez in the right way, we can create that excitement that Duran, Sugar Ray Leonard, and Marvelous Marvin Hagler had back in the 1980s. It's all about promotion. I just feel that if you're not with Bob Arum, you're not going to be promoted well. You're just not. He has plans for his fighters, like Floyd Mayweather; he's doing a great job with him. And he has other champions that he's bringing up very well. I think that if Trinidad and Quartey and Jose Luis Lopez sign with Bob Arum, Bob Arum will give them the right promotion to build up their name, and we can create big, super megafights.

RING: But that's not likely to happen.

DE LA HOYA: Yeah, Trinidad just signed with the Duvas. What I don't understand is that HBO just signed Trinidad and Quartey to fight. Why do that to those two opponents? The biggest money fight they'll have is with me. Bob Arum offered Quartey more money to fight me than what HBO offered to fight Trinidad. If one of them beats me, they'll shoot to the stars. They'll step up to a different level in their boxing career: the first guy to beat The Golden Boy. I have no idea why HBO did that. But I'm hopeful in the very near future that I can fight Trinidad. I want to fight Trinidad. I

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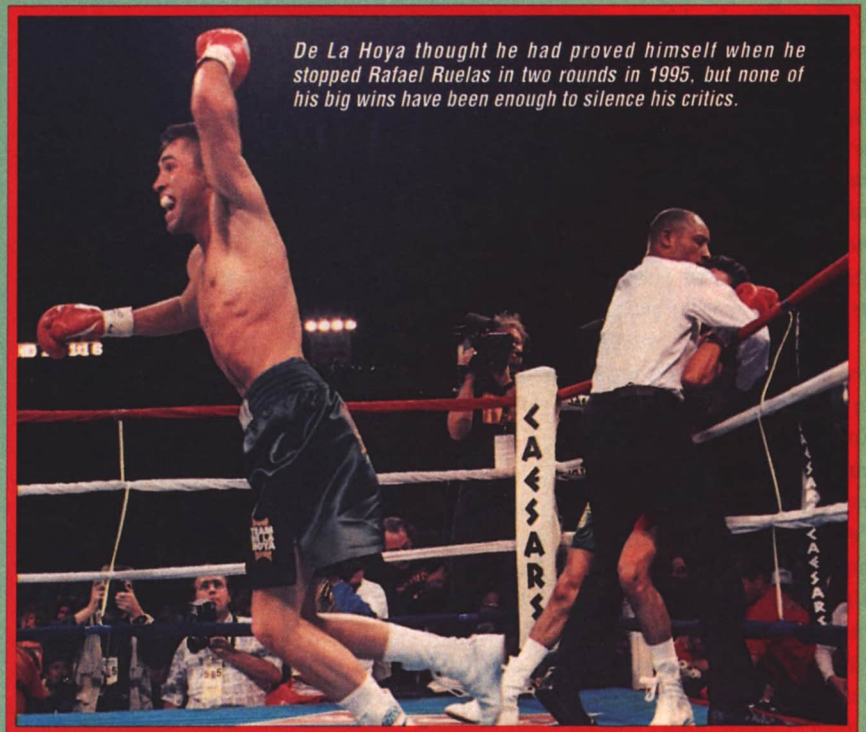
Photo by Chris Farina

"I don't duck anybody. I'm willing to fight anybody. Just have patience."



De La Hoya thought he had proved himself when he stopped Rafael Ruelas in two rounds in 1995, but none of his big wins have been enough to silence his critics.

CAN TYSON MUSCLE HISWAY BACK TO THE TOP?

25 Insiders Have Their Say

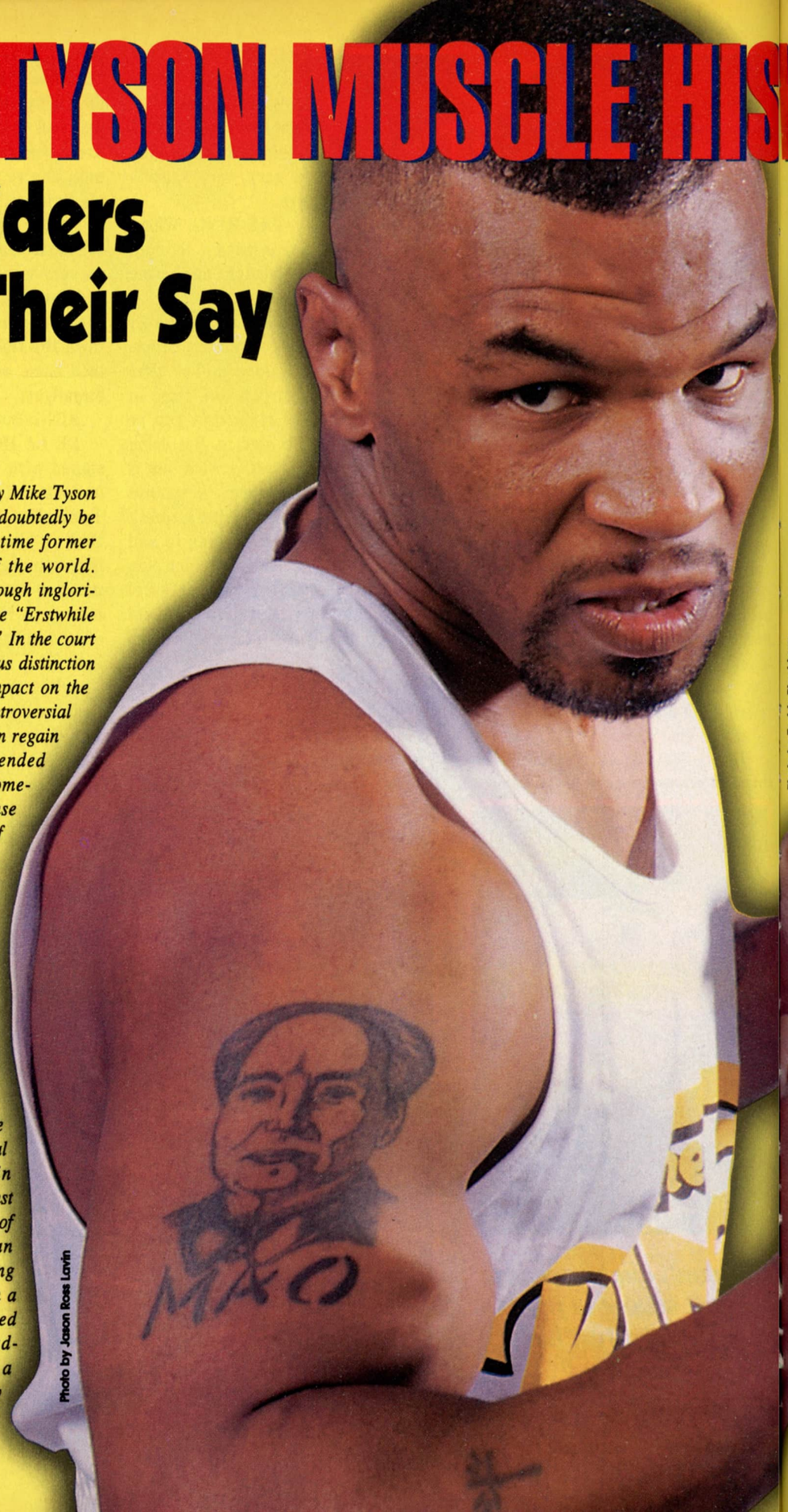


Photo by Jason Ross Lavin

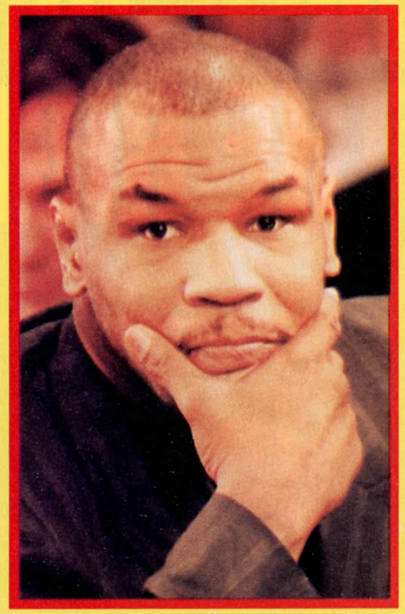
By Robert Mladinich

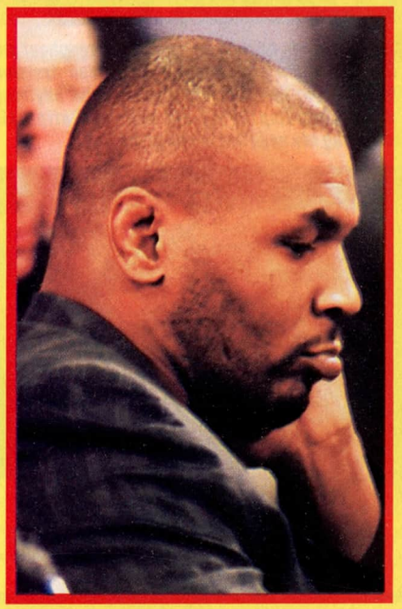
When the once-mighty Mike Tyson returns, he will undoubtedly be billed as the two-time former heavyweight champion of the world. Perhaps a more fitting, although inglorious, description would be the "Erstwhile Baddest Man On The Planet." In the court of public opinion, that dubious distinction will have a much greater impact on the latest chapter in Tyson's controversial career. Whether or not he can regain his past glory is an open-ended argument, and his latest comeback is being met with intense skepticism by his legion of critics and an equal amount of optimism by his most ardent supporters. Whether or not the enigmatic 32-year-old Tyson is revered or reviled, the strength of his public appeal can never be minimized. Even during his mandated hiatus, he was in the news almost as often as he was when he was fighting.

There was the motorcycle accident, the loss of his appeal in former trainer Kevin Rooney's civil litigation against him, his foray into the world of professional wrestling as an "enforcer," the wee-morning ruckus he allegedly caused in a diner when a woman claimed she rebuffed his sexual advances, and his blowup at a hearing before the New Jersey Athletic Control Board while trying to get his boxing license back. The most important newsmaker, however, was a scuffle he reportedly had with promoter Don King in a Los Angeles parking lot, a scuffle that King steadfastly downplayed as nothing more than a disagreement among "family." That well-publicized incident was quickly followed by a mammoth lawsuit against the promoter, as well as John Horne and Rory Holloway, the two men who, on paper at least, had been looking after Tyson's best interests as his managers of record since his release from prison.

Tyson also announced that the esteemed and irrefutable boxing manager Shelly Finkel, as well as recording industry honchos Jeff Wald and Irving Azoff, would now be handling his affairs as advisers. Armed with the muscle of this powerful triumvirate, Tyson would take on King, who insisted he still had an ironclad legal agreement with the fighter, then go after the heavyweight championship for a third time. THE RING polled 25 boxing insiders as to their opinion on what Tyson's boxing fortunes will be once he gets back in the ring. Purposely omitted were any "experts" who, publicly at least, would have any ax to grind with the fallen champion. That list included former trainers, managers, or those in his inner circle.

Photo by Teddy Blackburn





Tyson pleads his case before the New Jersey Athletic Control Board at a July hearing to determine whether or not he can be licensed to box in the Garden State. Before briefly losing his temper, Tyson mostly just appeared bored.

Lou DiBella (HBO Sports Vice President): "It's been a long time since Mike has been at the top of his game, and just as long since he has taken control of his life. I don't think it's too late to turn his professional life around, but to have a renaissance he must change all that is around him. Mike will always be an attrac-

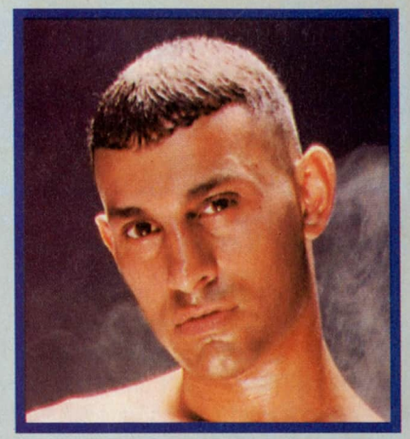
(Continued on page 55)

Boxing's Unlikely Savior?

ROY JONES TRIES TO DO THE RIGHT THING

Photo by Todd Warshaw/Allsport

Jones was his usual dominant self throughout most of the Del Valle fight and captured a lopsided decision win. In many ways, however, Jones has been anything but his usual self, improving his self-marketing skills and adjusting his negative views on boxing.



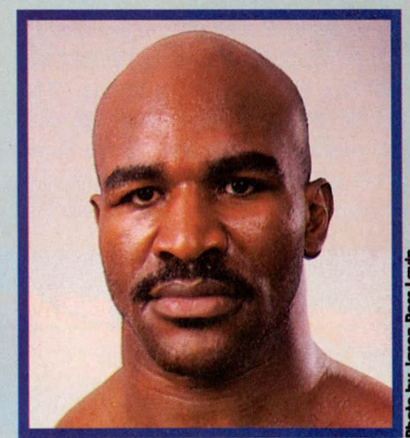


Photo by Jason Ross Lavin

Oscar De La Hoya, Naseem Hamed, and Evander Holyfield have all kept disappointing fight schedules in 1998. Surprisingly to many, Jones has picked up some of the slack.

By Eric Raskin

First, the bad news: As many predicted would be the case when we waved goodbye to 1997, the calendar year 1998 has been a slow one for boxing. Slower than Arturo Gatti getting up from his last enjoyable meal before the weight-cutting begins. Slower than a cut on Julio Cesar Chavez' face heals. Slower than a foot race between George Foreman and Larry Holmes. Pretty darn slow.

But here's the good news: The unlikeliest of fighters has stepped up to do his part to plug up the holes in this slowly sinking ship. A man dismissed as a hater of the sport that made him rich and famous, a man who had repeatedly admitted to placing his own welfare far ahead of the good of the game. A man with a Jordanesque talent factor and a Rodmanesque curiosity factor, but with a Pippenesque charisma factor. Perhaps the last man you expected to play the role of boxing's savior in 1998, Roy Jones.

When the year began, boxing fans were right to have low expectations for the 12 months ahead. The world's most famous fighter and boxing's top profit generator, Mike Tyson, was suspended until July, and couldn't realistically be expected to fight until at least September. The heavyweight fight that needed to be made to appease fans, Evander Holyfield vs. Lennox Lewis for the undisputed title, had fallen apart in the negotiation phase. And boxing's greatest pure talent, Jones, hadn't set foot in a ring since August 7, 1997, and didn't seem to be in any hurry to do so.

If expectations were already low for the year that lay ahead, then how disappointing is it that reality has somehow fallen short of those expectations? At least, we figured, Oscar De La Hoya, coming off a year in which he fought and won five times, would be active and adequately challenged. Hadn't Bob Arum promised us that "The Golden Boy" would be in a minimum of two megafights this year, facing the likes of Felix Trinidad, Ike Quartey, Jose Luis Lopez, and Pernell Whitaker? Nobody could have foreseen De La Hoya's wrist injury, but that doesn't excuse the fact that *none* of these fights has material-

Photo by Will Hart/HBO

Del Valle kept things interesting with his left hand, and he also impressed with his ability to take Jones' punch. "I didn't want to get knocked out in front of my home crowd," he quipped afterward.

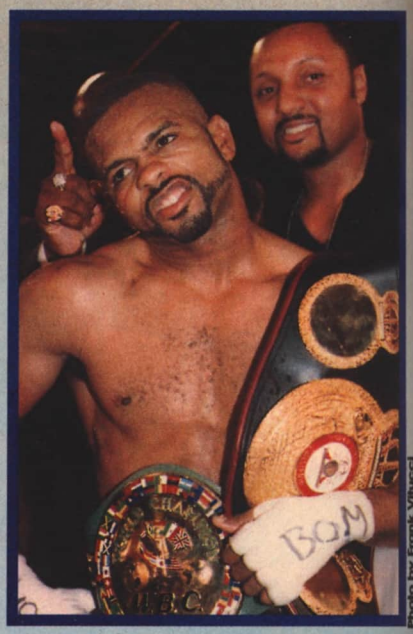


Photo by Frank Vitucci

Jones, who now owns the WBC and WBA title belts, is a difficult man to read. Whether he really enjoys boxing or not, the new Roy Jones is helping out the sport and finally doing what's best for his popularity and his legacy.

ized. Regardless of the result of his rematch with Chavez or who he fights in November, The Golden Boy has laid a pyrite egg in '98.

Naseem Hamed's American debut last December established him as an irresistible force on both sides of the Atlantic, and, tucked neatly into one of the most talent-laden weight ranges in boxing, "The Prince" seemed destined for a huge year. But Hamed repeatedly postponed a showdown with Kennedy McKinney (finally set—though not in stone—for October 31), and conveniently avoided opponents like Angel Manfredy while keeping busy against 37-year-old Wilfredo Vazquez, who turned out to be every bit as shot as we suspected.

And what can you say about Evander Holyfield's year that isn't spelled out plainly by this simple fact: When we went to press in August, the WBA/IBF heavyweight champ still hadn't fought once in 1998. He could've had Lewis for $16-million early in the year, or $20-million a few months later, but rejected both offers. It has been generally believed for years that "The Real Deal" feared no one and didn't care about money, but in '98, he has proved at least one, if not both, of these sentiments to be false.

As for boxing's second tier of stars, they've been an equally disappointing lot. Through the end of July, Trinidad, Gatti, Lewis, Bernard Hopkins, and Johnny Tapia had each fought once, while neither Quartey nor Whitaker had fought at all. It may not have been the fighters' faults they were inactive, but the problem remained. Boxing needed a messiah.

Is Jones that messiah? Probably not. But you can't deny he's trying hard, and in 1998, that counts for something. Especially when you consider that Jones started the year just as he finished the previous one—ensconced in doubts. The Pensacola, Florida, native was asked by the WBC to defend its version of the light heavyweight title against Michael Nunn and satisfy its mandatory requirements. But Jones, feeling the fight was worth more than the $1.8-million America Presents (Nunn's promoter) had offered him, respectfully declined. In March, Nunn was outpointed by Germany's Graciano Rocchigiani, whom the WBC began recognizing as champion while relegating Jones to the status of "champion in recess."

(Continued on page 56)

Photo by Al Bello/Allsport

History was made in the eighth round when Jones tasted the canvas for the first time in his career, courtesy of a left hand from Del Valle. Jones claimed he hadn't been knocked down since he was punched in the back of the head by another kid while hitting the bag at age 12.

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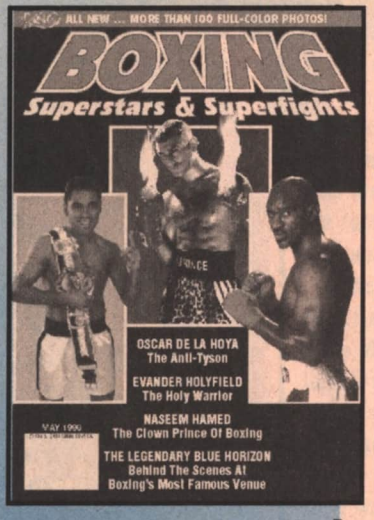

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BOB FITZSIMMONS vs. JIM HALL

The Match They Stopped At Bayonet Point!

By Pete Ehrmann

On a mid-July Sunday 108 years ago, church-goers in St. Paul, Minnesota, were exhorted from pulpits all over the city to smite down an evil that had recently descended on the area with such virulence as to put the Twin Cities on the front pages of newspapers all over the world.

It wasn't cocaine or prostitution, both of which were openly available then, nor even the shocking and wanton exhibitionism of females riding bicycles in public. "Pugilism" is how it was referred to in the high-toned sermons delivered in seven St. Paul churches on July 19, 1891; but in Chapter XIL, Section 1, of the Minnesota statute that had outlawed it in 1889, it was denoted as prize fighting and sparring.

Today, of course, it's called boxing, and it's legal now, although there are still some who would agree with St. Paul Archbishop John Ireland when he decried it in 1891 as "vulgar animalism" and led the effort to halt what was the most anticipated fight since John L. Sullivan knocked out Jake Kilrain two years before.

It was a contest for the middleweight (then 154 pounds) championship of the world between a couple of Australians. Bob Fitzsimmons, "The Fighting Blacksmith" (actually a Cornishman who moved Down Under as a lad), was the champion, and his challenger was Jim Hall, a plasterer by trade. Both were skillful, hard-hitting boxers, and making their scheduled July 22 clash in St. Paul even more alluring to fans of the sport was the fact that they genuinely hated each other's guts.

Bitter rivals Bob Fitzsimmons (left) and Jim Hall (right) trained three months for their July 22, 1891, middleweight title bout in St. Paul, Minnesota, but endured the disappointment of having the fight canceled at the last minute due to the influence of religious groups.

Fitzsimmons and Hall had met several times in Australia. The last time, in 1890, Hall had been credited with a fourth-round knockout. Then both sailed for America in search of, as one newspaper put it, "gore and glory," and Fitzsimmons, who subsequently won the title from Nonpareil Jack Dempsey, not only insisted that he'd taken a dive against Hall in their last fight for a $75 inducement, but that Hall had then stiffed him on the payoff.

So no Gay '90s Don King, if that era suffered such an aggravation, had to whip up a public relations souffle to make their St. Paul contest hot box office. When the match was signed by the Minnesota Athletic Club three months beforehand, ticket requests began coming in immediately from all over America. MAC officials began construction of an ampitheatre on W. 7th St. that would be big enough to hold the sportsmen who would come in by the trainload as fight time neared.

There was no secrecy about it, for while prize fighting was officially illegal in Minnesota, a misdemeanor punishable by "no less than 30 and no more than 60" days in jail, the law was only perfunctorily enforced. Fights were held in public frequently, and to observe the legal niceties sometimes the combatants were arrested after the fact and then let off with a small fine.

The Fitzsimmons-Hall fight had friends in high places. Gov. William Rush Merriam was also president of the Merchants' National Bank, whose head cashier was H.M. Seymour, who was also treasurer of the MAC. The $12,000 purse put up for the fighters—$11,000 to go to the winner, $1,000 to the loser—was on deposit in the bank.

Under the circumstances, Gov. Merriam had given his private assurances to MAC President T.Z. Cowles that there would be no state interference with the fight. And it was further reported that the governor, St. Paul Mayor Robert A. Smith, and Ramsay County Sheriff Ed S. Bean were down for special reserved ringside box seats.

For three months, while Fitzsimmons trained at White Bear Lake, Minnesota, and Hall prepared at John Kline's famous training camp in Beloit, Wisconsin, the hoopla about their fight grew apace with the MAC ampitheatre. A gate of $40,000 was predicted—a pittance by today's megafight standards, but a dream figure then.

July 22 fell on a Wednesday, and by the start of the preceding weekend it was reported that the fight "has brought northward the biggest crowd of lovers of all that is scientific and refined in the manly art that the Twin Cities have ever been called upon to entertain," and further that "already there are three times as many noted sports here as were numbered among the spectators of the Sullivan-Kilrain mill." And the latter had been for the heavyweight championship of the world.

But then, as happened to its apostolic namesake on the road to Damascus, suddenly the City of St. Paul got religion.

The first indications that local and state religious leaders were gearing up to stop the fight were brushed off by organizers and supporters of the event as unbelievable and preposterous. Why then, after over $15,000 had been spent putting up an arena and people were pouring into the area, and Fitzsimmons and Hall had spent three months in hard training—instead of back when the whole deal had been publicly signed and sealed? It was too absurd.

Outrageous, humphed Mayor Smith when called on by former Chamber of Commerce President Daniel R. Noyes with

(Continued on page 63)

SUMMARY

HEAVYWEIGHTS
Andrew Golota W 10 Corey Sanders
Jeremy Williams KO 1 Domingo Monroe
Kirk Johnson W 10 Levi Billups
Michael Rush W Disq. 10 Terrance Lewis
Orlin Norris W 12 Nate Miller
Ed Mahone KO 8 Daniel Netto
Phil Jackson W 10 Alex Stewart
David Izon W 8 Marion Wilson
Josh Dempsey KO 2 Anthony Green
Razor Ruddock KO 7 Rodolfo Marin
Wladimir Klitschko KO 6 Carlos Monroe
Wladimir Klitschko KO 1 Najee Shaheed
Vitali Klitschko KO 1 Ricardo Kennedy
Mario Schiesser KO 8 Kim Weber

CRUISERWEIGHTS
Carl Thompson KO 9 Chris Eubank
Kenny Keene W 12 Dominick Carter
Frank Tate KO 7 Tyler Hughes
Ramon Garbey KO 7 Onebo Maxime
Johnny Nelson KO 6 Peter Oboh
Buster Keeton KO 2 Kelly Oliver
Adrian Bellin KO 12 Peter Kinsella

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
Roy Jones W 12 Lou Del Valle
(Retains WBC Title; Wins WBA Title)
Drake Thadzi KO 7 John Scully
Antony Begini KO 9 John Mugabi
Rob Calloway KO 3 Lonnie Knowles
Ed Dalton KO 4 Troy Speakman

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Vinny Pazienza W 10 Glenwood Brown
Joseph Kiwanuka W 10 Glen Johnson
Eric Harding KO 2 Dave Hamilton
Tony Booth W 8 Omar Sheika

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Antwun Echols KO 6 Urbano Gurrola
Ryan Rhodes KO 8 Lorent Szabo
Julio Garcia W 10 Augustine Renteria
Naotaka Hozumi KO 2 Kwangbok Choi
Rhoshii Wells W 6 Ron Johnson

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Hector Camacho W 12 Tony Menefee
Anthony Jones W 10 Steve Martinez
Santiago Samaniego KO 6 Tim Shocks
Andrew Murray W 10 Aaron McLaurine
Howard Clarke W 8 Jason Papillion

WELTERWEIGHTS
Oba Carr W 10 Alfred Ankamah
Diobelys Hurtado KO 1 Elias Quiroz
Michele Piccirillo KO 7 Walter Saporiti
Jaime Ocegueda W 10 Eduardo Castillo

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS
Shea Neary W 12 Naas Scheepers
Rodney Jones KO 5 Ken Manuel

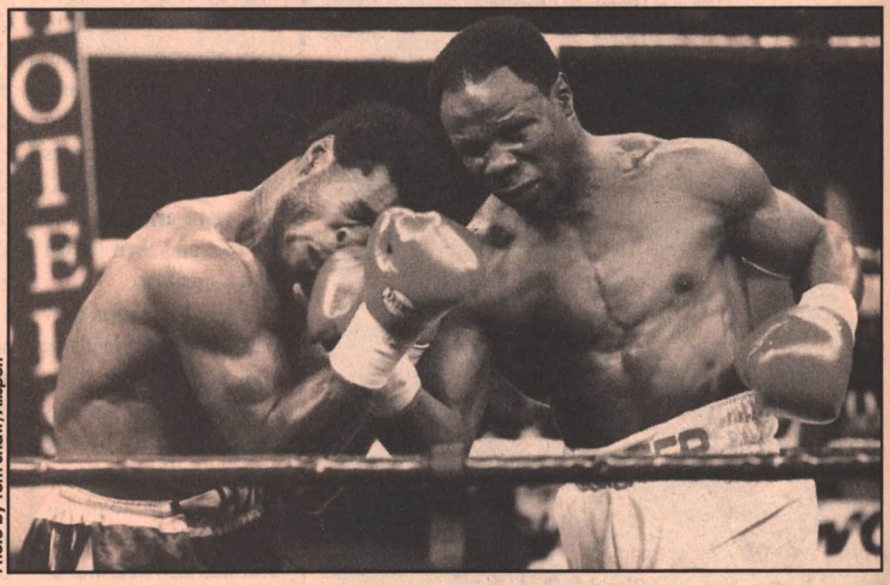

Photo by Tom Shaw/Allsport

Eubank scored early against Thompson, but had to quit when his left eye swelled shut

Junichi Ono KO 8 Yoshihiro Kuwata
Elio Ortiz KO 2 Joya Kawai

LIGHTWEIGHTS
Golden Johnson W 12 James Crayton
Colin Dunne W 12 Affif Djelti
Joel Casamayor KO 4 Gary Triano
Vivian Harris KO 1 Hector Cabrera

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS
Ric Ramirez Tech. Draw 4 Noel Panescoro
Eder Olivetti W 12 Jerry Quinones
William Abelyian KO 5 Roger Medal

FEATHERWEIGHTS
Derrick Gainer W 10 Kevin Kelley
Paul Ingle KO 4 Rakhim Mingaleev
Isaac Sentuwa KO 3 Insik Koh
Takeo Imaoka W 12 Samuel Duran
Jackie Gunguluza W 12 Andrew Matabola
Lewis Wood W 10 Oscar Antonio Salas
Claude Chinon KO 9 Matthias Lelievre
Tetsutora Senrima KO 3
Thanomsak Sithboabay
Atsushi Tamaki Tech. Draw 1
Khumpoon Eausamphan

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS
Jorge Eliecer Julio KO 2 Lupe Rangel
Simon Romani W 12 Patrick Mullings
Israel Vazquez W 10 Juan Manuel Chavez

BANTAMWEIGHTS
Danny Romero KO 1 Tomas Cordova
Cuauhtemoc Gomez W 12 Rodolfo Blanco
Mauricio Martinez KO 10 Marcos Badillo
Ariel Austria KO 5 Michael Partolan

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS
Satoshi Iida W 12 Joma Gamboa
(Retains WBA Title)
Mzukisi Sikali KO 8 Luigi Castiglione
Akihiko Nago KO 10 Hiroaki Murakoshi
Eiichi Odaka W 10 Takashi Yahara

FLYWEIGHTS
Mark Johnson W 12 Luis Rolon
(Retains IBF Title)
Alejandro Montiel W 12 Julio Coronell
Nolito Cabato W 10 Hayato Asai

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS
Leo Ramirez D 12 Rio Sumampong
Manny Melchor D 10 Jose Clasida

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RINGSIDE REPORTS

FIGHTER *of the* MONTH

Ah, *unification*. One of the sweetest words to the boxing fan's ears. A unification match assures us that, as long as it doesn't end in a draw, we will have one less alphabet soup champion to recognize when the final bell rings. And fewer champions mean a clearer picture of who the best fighter in a given weight class is. Not that in the light heavyweight division that picture wasn't already crystal clear.

Jones is the king of the 175-pounders, just as he was the generally agreed-upon ruler of the 168- and 160-pound divisions he competed in prior. He didn't need to take the WBA title from Lou Del Valle to prove his dominance, but Del Valle was as good an opponent as anybody, and a little extra hardware never hurts.

Jones, who put the WBC belt on the line against Del Valle, wasn't at his best in their July 18 fight in New York City, but the fact that he won such a one-sided decision over a quality opponent without even looking very sharp underscores how phenomenal he is when he's on. He looked unusually human, going down briefly in the eighth, but the end result was what mattered. Jones flicked a recognized world champion aside with little difficulty and became the owner of two belts at once, a distinction only Evander Holyfield can also currently claim. Let's hope IBF light heavy champ Reggie Johnson is next, because one of the only words sweeter than *unification* is *unified*.

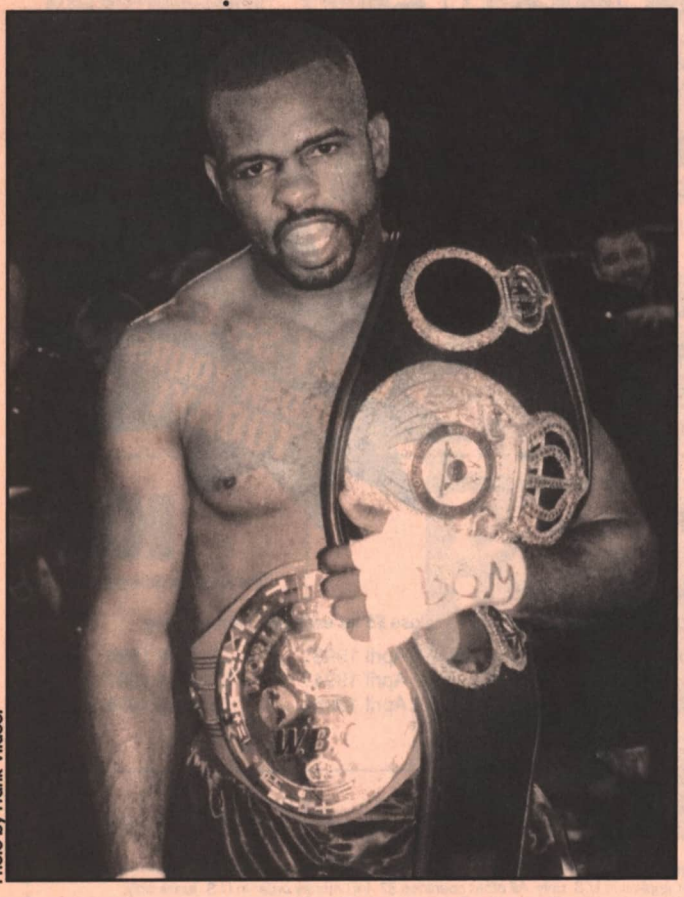


Photo by Frank Vitucci

• • • •

Roy Jones

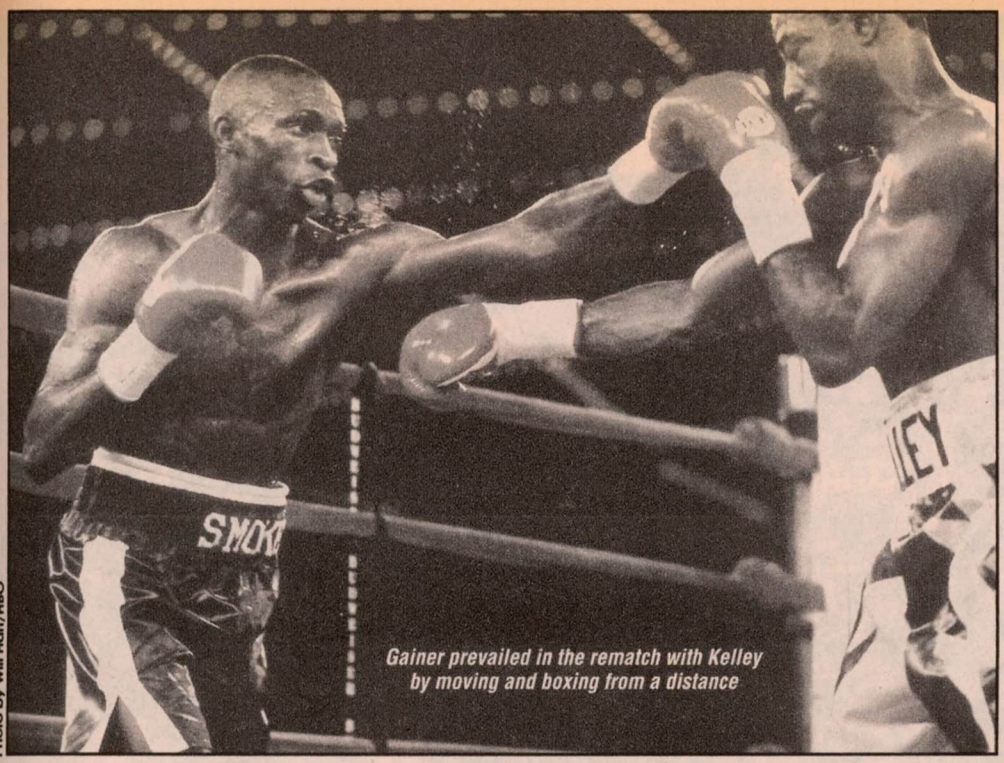


Photo by Will Hart/HBO

Gainer prevailed in the rematch with Kelley by moving and boxing from a distance

Derrick Gainer W 10 Kevin Kelley

New York, New York: Most boxing insiders thought this would be a freewheeling, wild swinging featherweight affair that would match the excitement and exhilaration of their first encounter two years ago. Gainer had been winning that fight handily when Kelley, his right eye a bloody, swollen pulp, staged a classic comeback and knocked Gainer out with a Hollywood-like left hook in the eighth round. Gainer, whose nickname is "Smoke," had gone into a well publicized funk afterward, and was so desperate for a rematch that he even called Kelley at home to demand one. So fixated on exacting revenge was Gainer that he turned down world title opportunities against WBC featherweight champion Luisito Espinosa and IBF junior lightweight titlist Roberto Garcia in order to take this fight, which was held at The Theater in Madison Square Garden underneath Roy Jones-Lou Del Valle.

While this battle of southpaws did not live up to its hype in the excitement department, Gainer, 126, Pensacola, Florida, did revitalize his battered psyche and his career by scoring a unanimous decision over the rapidly fading Kelley, 126, Flushing, New York. Kelley hit the canvas near the end of the first round from what many ringsiders perceived to be a slip, while others viewed it as coming from a glancing right hand. Gainer's knockdown of Kelley in the seventh round, however, was unquestionable. A left uppercut to the body dropped Kelley to the canvas in a heap. After precariously rising to his feet, he was teetering on the brink of oblivion, but managed to secure a few precious extra seconds by walking away from referee Arthur Mercante Jr. (USA).

Even with Kelley visibly hurt, the determined and well-disciplined Gainer refused to get into a slugfest with the aging 31-year-old warhorse. He continued to pick him apart with occasional flurries of well-placed punches before dancing out of harm's way when Kelley got too close. With this victory, Gainer now finds himself in the midst of the "Prince" Naseem Hamed sweepstakes, a place every featherweight on the planet wants to be.

"Since the first [Kelley] fight, I've developed a lot more discipline and maturity," said Gainer. "I almost quit the game after that because I was so disappointed in myself. This fight meant everything to me. I wanted to redeem myself and that's just what I did. This is the beginning of big things. The Prince, [Arturo] Gatti, Garcia, I'll fight any of them. I'll even give Kelley a rematch, just in case anybody thinks this was a fluke."

Although the fight was not particularly pleasing to watch, the 25-year-old Gainer did employ a very intelligent strategy. Rather than get caught up in the macho emotional windmill that seemed to be swirling in his head and his heart in the days before the bout, he wisely refused to slug with the slugger, and completely outboxed the former world champion. Judge Don Ackerman (USA) scored the bout 96-92, while Louis Rivera (USA) had it 96-94, and Joe Dwyer (USA) saw it 96-93.

What Gainer deserved most credit for was his ability to not let his emotions take over and engage in the reckless behavior that got him knocked out the last time. More than anything else, that will make him a force to be reckoned with in a very strong division. His record is now 24-4 (16), while Kelley, who said he was going to "go home and contemplate things," saw his record dip to 48-3-2 (32).

Television: HBO

Promoter: M & M Sports, Square Ring Inc., Madison Square Garden

(7-18-98)

Robert Mladinich

Mark Johnson W 12 Luis Rolon

Verona, New York: It started out as a humdinger, but fizzled into a tatter of boos. Mark "Too Sharp" Johnson, 112, Washington, D.C., successfully defended the IBF flyweight title for the sixth time with a near-shutout decision over challenger Luis Rolon, 112, Vega Baja, Puerto Rico. Presented by the latest entry onto the casino-boxing scene, the Oneida Nation's Turning Stone Casino Resort, the 12-rounder was a play in two acts.

Act I, the first six rounds, was exciting and well-fought. In hectic inside trading, Too Sharp lived up to his moniker, while Rolon proved a willing and able rival. Johnson outfought his challenger head-on, but not in a wild and reckless frenzy. He made use of his uncommon skills to hook around and through Rolon's tight

Johnson was terrific in the first six rounds against Rolon

Photo by Ray Bailey

guard, positioned himself well on defense, and dished out a relentless torrent of precision shots to the body and head. The bristly Rolon traded almost punch-for-punch, but it was Johnson who landed the clean, damaging blows, and finished off the exchanges.

The challenger's cause wasn't helped when he tried to establish his own body attack. Lacking Johnson's precision, he was repeatedly warned by ref Wayne Kelly (USA) for low blows, being penalized in the fifth and again in the sixth. By this time, the challenger was not only frustrated, but showing the wear of Johnson's own withering body assault.

Act II, the second half, was a different fight. In round seven, Johnson seemed to lose the ability to continue his brilliant infighting, and began circling away with sporadic potshotting. To cover the slowdown in activity, he laid down a smokescreen of exaggerated, superfluous motion, often without scoring a followup blow. Unfortunately for Rolon, he seemed bedazzled by the champion, and went from worthy adversary to unwitting foil. Unable to seize any opportunity from Johnson's change of tactics, the Puerto Rican looked like a straight man poking mock punches, while Johnson disdainfully made himself a pop-up target. After an exchange of solid blows led off the 11th, the titlist again lapsed into his stall tactics. The crowd became tired of Johnson's act and ended by booing what had begun as a corker.

Ed Marchand (USA) scored it 120-106, while Nelson Vasquez (Puerto Rico) and Don Ackerman (USA) both had it 119-107. The 26-year-old Johnson raised his record to 35-1 (25), while the 31-year-old Rolon fell to 18-3 (11).

Television: ABC

Promoter: Cedric Kushner Promotions and Dennis Rappaport Productions

(7-26-98)

J.R. Jowett

Zolani Petelo KO 7 Carmelo Caceres

Hammanskraal, South Africa: South African Petelo pleased his army of fans with a seventh-round TKO victory over Filipino Caceres in a scheduled 12-rounder, retaining the IBF mini flyweight title for a second time in front of an estimated crowd of 2,500 at the Carousel Casino.

Petelo, 105, who won the title in a major upset last December by stopping Ratanapol Sor Vorapin, started slowly on this very cold night, choosing to box intelligently and cautiously from behind his southpaw jab to keep Caceres, 104½, on his heels. The South African eased into his game after the first, methodically hurting the challenger with stiff jabs to the head and hurtful lefts to the body. Petelo took each of the first six rounds on THE RING's scorecard.

A left hook sent Caceres down heavily in the seventh. He managed to beat the count, but soon afterward, the champion trapped the challenger in his own corner, pounding him with rights and

lefts. It came as no surprise when referee Lulama Mtya (South Africa) stepped in—possibly a little late—at 1:46 of the round to call it off.

This was an outstanding win for the 22-year-old champion, whose record now stands at 13-2-2 (7). Caceres, 23, fell to 15-3-3 (3).

Promoter: Rodney Berman

(7-4-98)

Ron Jackson

Carl Thompson KO 9 Chris Eubank

Sheffield, England: It lacked the dramatic intensity of their first battle three months previous, but reinforced the theory that a good big 'un will always beat a good little 'un. Eubank, 190, Brighton, England, whose best years involved him dispensing leather among the super middleweights, succumbed again to damage around his left eye, and Thompson, 189½, Horwich, England, who had prevailed by split decision in April, was declared the winner after nine hard rounds. The bout, held at the Sheffield Arena, was inevitable given the unremitting excitement generated by their initial meeting.

Self-styled lord of the manor Eubank had at least half a dozen chances to stop Thompson when they first fought, but was frustrated by his 34-year-old opponent's greater consideration for defense this time. Even so, the two-time conqueror of Michael Watson and nemesis of Nigel Benn built a strong lead by cleverly evading the majority of Thompson's heavier blows and hammering home solid shots that always looked capable of reacquainting Thompson with Queer Street. But Eubank's left eye began to close in the fifth, and by the ninth, ringside physician Dr. Thakur Singh advised English referee Paul Thomas that the injury was too severe for the injured fighter to continue.

Brisk, snappy combinations claimed the early rounds for Eubank, 45-5-2 (23), who used the ring well, moving in and out and avoiding the furious exchanges that characterized the first fight. Thompson, 24-4 (16), who again neglected the jab, took a hard right and a left hook in the fourth, but was more productive in the fifth, encouraged no doubt by embryonic signs of swelling around Eubank's left eye again.

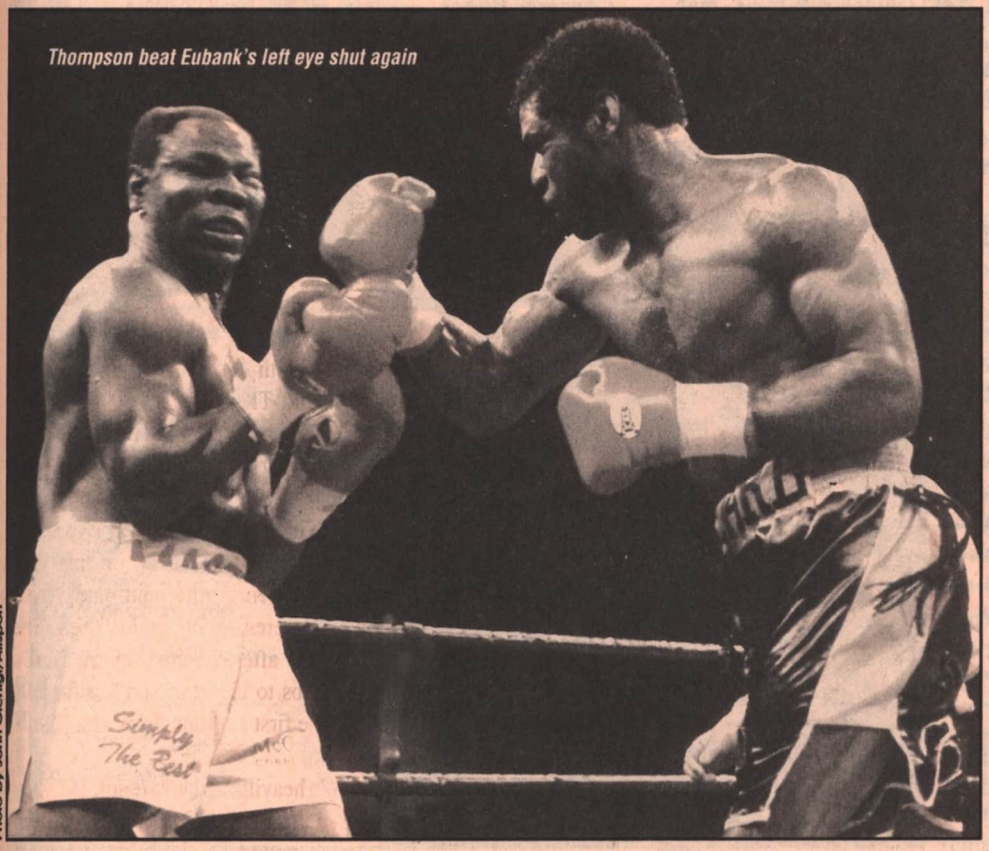
A good right uppercut and left hook by Eubank may have dampened that enthusiasm in the seventh, but Thompson hit back punch-for-punch in a neutral corner. By the end of the round, the eye was almost completely shut, and over the next two rounds, Eubank absorbed an increasing number of right hands, making his situation ominous. The intervention of the ringside doctor was a merciful release. American judges Ruben Garcia and Adelaide Triplett both had Eubank leading 87-84, while England's Roy Francis saw it 86-86 at the end of nine rounds.

"I don't want people thinking I'm too brave for my own good, but I didn't look like a shot fighter," said Eubank, who insisted he would let the public decide if he should carry on.

Promoter: Frank Warren

(7-18-98)

Brian Doogan



Thompson beat Eubank's left eye shut again

Photo by John Gichigi/Allsport

Satoshi Iida W 12 Julio Gamboa

Nagoya, Japan: Japanese lefty Iida, 115, kept the WBA junior bantamweight title as he withstood the furious opening attack of number-one contender "Yambito" Gamboa, 115, Nicaragua, fought back hard from the sixth on, and earned a close but unanimous decision over 12 hard-fought rounds before some 8,000 spectators at the Rainbow Hall. Judges Lou Tabat (USA), Francisco Sandoval (Venezuela), and Orlando Sam (Panama) all scored it 115-113 for the taller of the two southpaws. The 26-year-old champ raised his mark to 25-1-1 (11), while Gamboa, also 26, dropped to 23-3 (14).

In the first session, Gamboa amazed the crowd with his furious aggressiveness, landing solid left crosses followed by southpaw right hooks to the still-nervous champ. The second followed a similar pattern, with Gamboa taking the initiative with his incessant combinations to the face and belly. Gamboa, a former Latin American champ, suffered a cut over the right eyebrow due to an accidental butt in the third. In accordance with the new WBA

rules, Iida was penalized a point by referee Rafael Ramos (USA).

Gamboa won the fourth as he landed his favorite left crosses to the Japanese champ, who retaliated with a few right jabs and one-two combinations. The Nicaraguan, however, had a gash on the right cheek, which grew so big and deep that it continued streaming blood as the contest progressed.

The battle began to turn in the fifth when Iida changed his strategy, abandoning his original plan to outbox the Nicaraguan, and turning toward a more aggressive approach. Iida also sustained a gash over the right eyebrow in the fifth, but remained in command from the fifth through eighth rounds. He repeatedly scored with left crosses to the bloodied cheek of his onrushing opponent.

Gamboa dominated the ninth with effective combos and right hooks, though Iida still kept the pressure on him. The champ gamely went on to mix it up, landing solid bodyshots to the fading challenger to take the 10th and 11th. The game Nicaraguan put forth a last surge in the 12th round with his face masked in crimson, but it was not enough to overcome the point deficit.

It was a gory but good fight with each desperately showing their best. Iida, having made his second defense, said, "I fought very hard from the sixth on. I wanted to outbox him, but my combinations in the close range were effective enough to weaken him in the second half."

Promoter: Midori and Teiken Promotions
(7-26-98)
Joe Koizumi

Andrew Golota W 10 Corey Sanders

Atlantic City, New Jersey: The Polish flag was everywhere when the 30-year-old Golota, 241, Chicago, Illinois, met Sanders, 262, Washington, D.C., at the Trump Taj Mahal. Fans of Golota wore the red-and-white over their shoulders, and sang songs to their hero. And after only two rounds of the exciting and bloody back-and-forth tilt, Golota himself began to resemble the flag, as his massive torso was covered in the blood of his opponent.

A pulverizing overhand right opened a gaping cut over the left eye of Sanders early in the second, sending red spurts everywhere. The cut was so deep, it forced referee Tony Orlando (USA) to call a time-out so that ringside doctor Richard Snepar could take a look. Sanders was bleeding so profusely, his blood got into Golota's eyes, and the broadcast table of *Tuesday Night Fights* commentators Al Albert and Sean O'Grady was splattered with large droplets.

But just when it seemed as if Golota was going to have an easy night, Sanders rallied, making it more of a fight than Golota may have originally expected. The 23-year-old Sanders showed a game heart, battling back in the last seconds of the second round with shots to Golota's head.

"They kept asking me if I could see," said Sanders, who was never bothered by the cut again. "I told them, 'I can see, I can see.' I didn't want anyone to stop this fight."

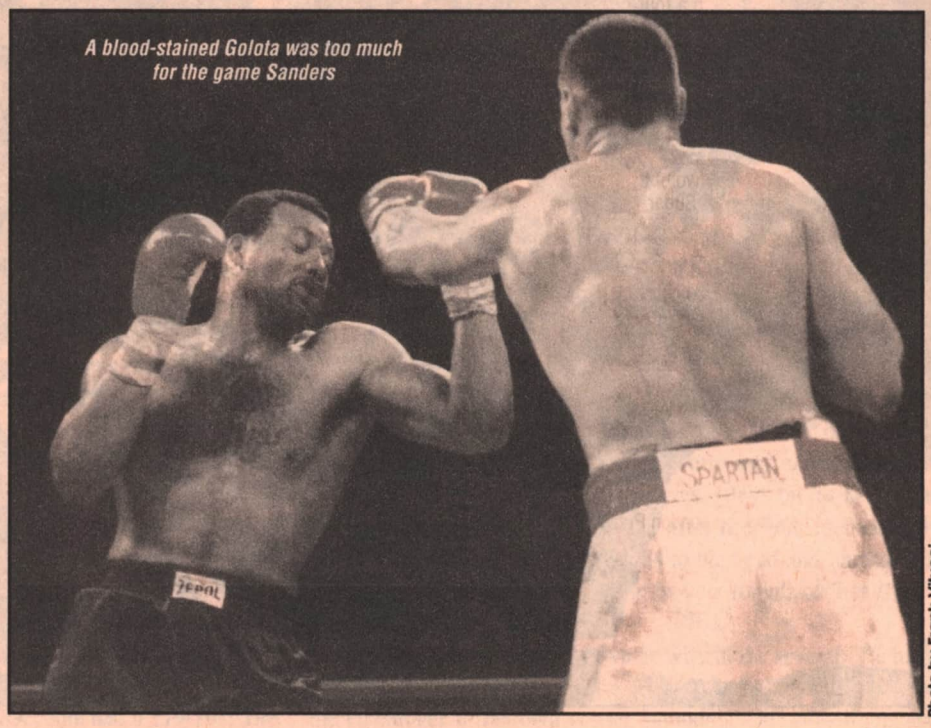
Sanders, 16-6 (10), was in great shape, and it showed. Five months earlier, in his last fight, he weighed 288, and had weighed as much as 301 for a 1997 fight. But perhaps the biggest surprise to Golota, and the 3,679 in attendance, wasn't Sanders' new, slimmed-down look, but rather his ability to take a punch and fire back. Dino Duva, Golota's promoter, was so impressed, he told Sanders he probably earned himself some quality fights with his gutsy performance.

"That guy was like a rock," Golota said of Sanders. "How can you hit a guy like that, and have him not go down? His chin was unbelievable. In the second round, he was taking so many punches, I felt like a butcher."

Golota, 31-3 (27), was in control throughout the fight, using a steady jab, as well as movement that he had not displayed in the recent past. His attack included an array of double jabs, hooks, and bodyshots. The only time Golota appeared to be in trouble came in the seventh, when Sanders stunned him with an overhand right to the head in the closing seconds of the round. The Polish contender also ended up with cuts above and below his left eye, but never was his bleeding as extreme as Sanders' was.

The judges awarded Golota a unanimous decision. Debra Barnes (USA) scored it 100-90, Kason Cheeks (USA) had it 97-93, and Paul Venti (USA) saw it 99-90. THE RING card read 97-94 for Golota.

Television: USA
Promoter: Main Events
(7-21-98)
Joe Santoliquito ■



A blood-stained Golota was too much for the game Sanders

Photo by Frank Vitucci

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Oscar De La Hoya

(Continued from page 37)

want to fight him now. I called him out in my last fight. That's the very first time I did that.

RING: Yet he calls you a coward. Does that annoy you?

DE LA HOYA: It doesn't annoy me. It's just *(pauses)* I mean, why lie to himself? His father's the one that doesn't want to sign. The contract is there. I've seen it. Bob Arum has it for Trinidad to sign. He'll get paid way more money than he does for his normal fights, much more money. Why doesn't he sign? To become a great champion, you have to fight great champions. And what I want to do in boxing is create history. I understand that I can't dodge anybody. I don't want to dodge anybody. I want to go out there and fight the very best. All these politics and contracts and promoters and managers are screwing everything up.

RING: And we also have the HBO-Showtime rivalry.

DE LA HOYA: It's made it worse. The relationship between HBO and Showtime. They just can't work together. It's impossible.

RING: Is it true that you were never in a street fight?

DE LA HOYA: Yes.

RING: Weren't they tough to avoid growing up in East L.A.?

DE LA HOYA: Yeah, it's tough. Tough to avoid. Just the fact that I'm a boxer makes it tough to avoid. Believe it or not, I've never been a violent person outside the ring.

RING: You just walk away?

DE LA HOYA: Yeah, I try to talk my way out of it. Enemies that I know that I have, I try to make friends with them. It's just the way I've always been.

RING: You're so famous now, it's getting harder and harder for you to move around and live a normal life. How do you cope?

DE LA HOYA: I'm enjoying it. I'm living with it. It's okay. I accept it. It's part of my life and it's going to be like this maybe for the rest of my life, and I can handle it. I've learned to accept it, and I really enjoy it now.

RING: Can you go to a store and buy something without getting mobbed?

DE LA HOYA: It depends where you're at and what situation you're in. It's difficult, actually. It's very tough. Everywhere I go I feel uncomfortable because I know I'm going to get approached by people. It feels sometimes awkward knowing that I just can't go anywhere and feel normal. There's even been times that I put on a disguise. For instance, I went to Disneyland one day and I put on a disguise. A hat, a wig.

RING: Did it work?

DE LA HOYA: No, it didn't work, actually. I was like, *Wow, these people must be like die-hard boxing fans.* So what happens is I give one autograph, and next thing you know, I'm still there for like two hours.

RING: Maybe you should learn to say no.

DE LA HOYA: That's impossible for me. I just can't. I could never, ever say no.

RING: That's a nice trait to have. But I don't understand why you need to sign slips of paper to such an extent that it screws up your life.

DE LA HOYA: I don't understand. I mean, I've signed little match thingies. And I'm thinking, *what are they going to do with them?* Is it to brag to your friends that you got an autograph? It makes me think. If they had a nice picture or something, that's different. You can frame it or something, but when they come with a napkin or something.

RING: How are you coping with all these women throwing themselves at you?

DE LA HOYA: It's a beautiful thing, you know. I'm glad that I can bring more women into this game. You know women may not take over boxing, but they can change boxing's image for the better. And it will be good for everybody, for everybody who's involved with boxing because it's a different audience. It will be good for the pay-per-view business. It will be good for other boxers. It will be good for just the business side of boxing. I'm just glad that I'm in the position where I can change all that for the sport. I think boxing is going to shoot up to a different level now. We are now looking into getting boxing into the Internet with my fights. We're actually trying to work up a deal where we can show my fights on the Internet. And there's no black boxes where people can get the fight free. You have to pay on the spot.

RING: You almost died on a freeway last year. Did that change you?

DE LA HOYA: It did change me, of course. I was so close, very, very close to losing my life. Yeah, it changed me a lot. You look at life differently. You appreciate what you have, especially your family, when things like that happen. It wakes you up.

RING: You're a father now. Has that also changed your perspective?

DE LA HOYA: Oh yes, it's changed my life. It's remotivated me. I now feel that boxing over the next four years is a big part of my life. I train harder now. I'm more dedicated. I look forward to going into the gymnasium now. Before, I was thinking of retiring this year. Having to plan for my child, it changed everything for me.

RING: And your relationship with your son's mother?

DE LA HOYA: It's a beautiful relationship.

RING: We haven't talked about the Oscar De La Hoya Foundation. What would you like to say about it?

DE LA HOYA: My Foundation has now, I believe, five national amateur champions. We have more than 200 kids training in the [Oscar De La Hoya] Gymnasium [in East Los Angeles]. The average age is about eight-to-nine years old.

RING: And they don't have to pay for training?

DE LA HOYA: No, they pay. I believe it's $3 a month. But the reason why we charge $3 is so they can have some kind of responsibility.

RING: Does the Foundation pay the trainers?

DE LA HOYA: Yeah, we have, I believe, eight trainers now. We have activities for kids. We have a computer learning center for them. We take kids each week to baseball games, Dodger games or Angel games. Most of them are neighborhood kids. We have a few girls

boxing, too. It's a good program. We figure we can shoot for national gyms everywhere. We had a dinner where we raised a lot of money. A lot of good people were there. This year we'll have the second one, in October. We'll raise even more money. With that money, we'll open up another youth center.

RING: Where?

DE LA HOYA: We're thinking about that. We have to find out where the kids need help the most.

RING: This interview is going to be read by real fight fans. Is there some message you want to give to them?

DE LA HOYA: The only message is patience, patience to all the fight fans out there. This is the sixth year of my professional boxing career. A lot of champions didn't even have one world title in five years. I've captured five world titles in four different weight classes. I just tell them, have patience. I'm willing, and I don't duck anybody. I'm willing to fight anybody. Just have patience. ■

Mike Tyson

(Continued from page 39)

tion, but not necessarily a factor. He must re-establish his hunger, and there is much evidence that he is trying to do just that."

Michael Grant (heavyweight contender): "Mike's heart will be filled with frustration because he won't ever be the same as he once was. But he'll still be a force, and get by with his chin and his power. His experience won't help because he doesn't have the right sort of attitude to learn from experience. Still, the heavyweight division is a little shaky right now, and except for Evander, Lennox Lewis, me, and maybe a few others, there is not too much out there. So he'll do okay until he gets to the top guys."

Mark Kriegel (New York *Daily News* sportswriter): "Most people base their perception of Mike on those 91 seconds against Michael Spinks. Mike was never that fighter again, and he never will be. He always depended on making his opponents frightened of him. Now there is less and less to be frightened of because more and more [of the Tyson myth] is lost."

Marvis Frazier (former heavyweight contender who was stopped in one round by Tyson): "Most people forget the fact that when I fought Mike, some people had me favored to win. Nobody ever expected Evander to beat Mike, and nobody will ever expect Mike to beat him now. But funny things happen in boxing, especially when Mike Tyson is concerned. Only a fool would ever forget that."

Bob Spagnola (manager of fringe heavyweight contender Lou Savarese): "Tyson keeps the turnstiles humming. He was a juggernaut in his time, and it is hard for people to forget that. I think Tyson should go on an international barnstorming tour, then go after whoever is on top. From Mike's vantage point, Holyfield shouldn't really mean that much. All another fight with him will do is bring up the negative stuff of the past. Mike should take advantage of the name he has, max out on some easy fights, and ease his way back to the top. Nobody can generate money like he can."

Don Turner (trainer of Evander Holyfield and Michael Grant): "Mike was probably the most overrated boxer in the history of the game. The press made him out to be the biggest and the baddest guy on the block. Look at the guys that gave him trouble: Tony Tucker, Mitch Green, Bonecrusher Smith. These guys weren't killers. Mike might bowl over a couple of guys, but a few heavyweights are gonna be tough. Guys like Evander, Hasim Rahman, Michael Grant; he's not gonna be beating them. The only system that ever worked for Mike was the Cus D'Amato/Kevin Rooney system. And that is the only one that will ever work. As far as ever beating Evander, that will never happen. And he knows that."

Tony Paige (former president of the Boxing Writers Association of America and a radio talk show host on WFAN in New York): "First of all, I think Tyson should be banned for life. The ear-biting incident was reprehensible, like something a coward would do in a field of battle. About all that is left of his once-great talent is a carcass, because there is not much of a fighter left. He still might beat 90 percent of the heavyweights out there because the division is bereft of talent. Age has caught up with him, he gets hit a lot, and his number-one offensive threat, intimidation, is gone."

Jesse Reid (trainer): "The most important thing Mike needs is an effective, physical, on-site trainer, not a cheerleader. He needs someone in his corner to look him in the eye and get that extra mileage from him. Don Turner is not only Holyfield's coach, he is like his spirit, too. I would love the opportunity to work with Mike. I would add inches and angles, and have him turning those shoulders to get even more power than he has shown in the past. We need him in the business because he creates so much energy."

Chris Thorne (*Newark Star-Ledger* boxing writer): "As ghoulish as it sounds, the level of fury and viciousness associated with Tyson will make people wonder if he will bite people again. If Tyson refocuses his energies and gets an effective trainer and good sparring partners, he could still beat anybody. Remember, Holyfield is not invincible either."

Chuck Wepner (former heavyweight contender): "The simple fact is that Mike Tyson is good for boxing. For better or worse, he's a true fighter. He'll never be what he was at 22 years old, but he'll be good enough to win another title. He could beat a guy like Lennox Lewis if he got the right trainer, and went back to his old style of fighting. He is always ready to fight physically and emotionally, but psychologically he could use a few tuneups and a lot of work in the gym. Don't ever count him out. That would be a big mistake."

Bobby Czyz (former IBF light heavyweight and WBA cruiserweight champion): "Mike is arguably the single best fighter in the world and arguably the biggest money machine in the business. During his vacation he had plenty of opportunities to fight in Europe and make millions, but chose to honor the revocation. That says a lot about the man he is. Whether or not he regains his luster depends not on who is managing him, but on who is advising him. He needs a comfort zone from the vultures. If he starts winning, he will eventually generate a nine-figure income. That is going to bring out a lot of vultures, even well-meaning people that just can't control themselves around that kind of money."

J Russell Peltz (promoter): "Tyson will definitely make a lot of money, but his success depends on who he surrounds himself with. I would take Tyson on the road

fighting local heavyweights not even in the top 20 for about a year-and-a-half. I wouldn't even think of the big time for a while. Tyson doesn't have that fear factor anymore. That was based on invincibility, which is obviously long gone."

Carl Moretti (matchmaker for Main Events): "Mike might have slipped technically over the years, but is still the hardest puncher in the division. He will always have the aura that will psych out a lot of opponents, but guys like Lou Savarese and Andrew Golota would provide more than formidable opposition. Mike fought after the rape conviction with no problems at all until Evander. I think there was more pressure on him from Evander than there was from being sent to jail or the entire legal system."

Hector Rocha (trainer): "Most people get out of jail and try to be straight, but Tyson always acted like he was on vacation. The past doesn't seem to bother him at all. If he makes a lot of mental changes and learns how to fight at more than one level, he'll be knocking everybody out again. He's not a stupid fighter, but in order to beat Holyfield he must fight at different levels and have more than one plan."

Bernard Fernandez (*Philadelphia Daily News* boxing writer): "He can't come back against somebody as clearly bogus as Peter McNeeley, but by the same token, he can't come back against a certified killer either. He must be handled very carefully in order to maximize his immense popularity and minimize on his obviously diminished skills. In terms of legitimacy, he can't go below someone like Lou Savarese, and he certainly can't go much above that right away either."

Stan Hoffman (manager of Lucia Rijker): "He can and will be as formidable as ever. But Mike is a very smart guy, and all these changes should do him good. Can he beat Holyfield? Absolutely! Will he beat Holyfield? You can never count Holyfield out, but you can't count Mike out either."

Rocco DePersia (manager of former WBA heavyweight champion Bruce Seldon, who was stopped by Tyson in one round): "After seeing Holyfield beat him, a lot of heavyweights won't be afraid to step right into battle with him. They realize he is hurtable, and if they can withstand his early barrage, they can take him out. If Tyson ends up in the ring with the same Evander that beat him twice, it is improbable that he can win. But don't forget, the clock is ticking on Evander, too. Evander has also looked old in a couple of fights, so on a good night for Mike, anything could happen."

Alan Goldstein (*Baltimore Sun* boxing writer): "He can't afford a charade fight like McNeeley, and should come back against a second-echelon type fighter like South African Corrie Sanders. I don't think he has the style to ever beat Holyfield."

Tom McNeeley (former heavyweight title challenger whose son Peter lost to Tyson via disqualification): "What Holyfield did to him twice will always be on his mind. Tyson bounced around to so many people after Cus D'Amato died that something is now missing. Still, Mike will win some big fights and be a formidable guy for anybody out there."

Harold Brazier (junior welterweight veteran of over 100 fights): "The losses to Holyfield will be like black clouds that hover over him forever. To be great you can't just knock people out, you have to have great character, too. The question is, can he live with that? I think that even if he knocks out the top two or three guys, he will never regain the past glory, and that will be very hard for him to live with."

David Izon (heavyweight contender): "Lots of heavyweights will still be afraid of him, but Holyfield will never be afraid of him. Tyson must remember he is a real fighter, not a boxer. He must forget about ear-biting and foul punching, and fight like he knows how. When he is at his best, he does not need to do all that stuff."

Curtis Cokes (former welterweight champion and current trainer of heavyweight Ike Ibeabuchi): "Mike has to realize he's not the old Mike Tyson, the brute, and start fighting much smarter. He can't overpower people anymore. I'm not sold on the myth that you can't teach old dogs new tricks. I still think Mike could beat Holyfield if he gets his confidence level back. Mike needs some better equipped sparring partners and a few confidence builders, and he'll be back in business. He just has to learn to use his age and experience instead of brute strength."

Richard Frazier (light heavyweight contender): "He's not washed-up by any means, but he'll never beat Holyfield. He got tortured in the first fight before he got knocked out. When he fought him again, it was like putting a beaten lion back into the same lion cage. But Mike could beat guys like Lennox Lewis or Michael Grant. Grant's big and strong, but he's still learning. You don't learn against Tyson. Tyson would do the lawn mower on him."

Dan Hirschberg, (*The Trentonian* sportswriter): "He will never lose his aura, but will probably always be just a baby step away from his past glory. Over the years, his status has become so elevated that nobody could regain it. Even if he has a great comeback, it will be compared to that elevated status and just seem ordinary."

Carlos Ortiz (former lightweight champion): "First of all, he should be barred for life. He should not be fighting anymore, not only for what he did, but because he is a small heavyweight. Other fighters have his number now, and almost anybody he fights will knock him out. This kid is not well, and he has ruined boxing. He always scared people, but not anymore. Now he's just an ordinary heavyweight. In my day, fighters did everything to glorify boxing because it made us a good living. Today, fighters make good money, but they don't care about the game." ■

Robert Mladinich is a freelance writer based in New York City and a regular contributor to this magazine.

Roy Jones

(Continued from page 42)

No matter, Jones would have had to give up the 175-pound belt anyway if he was to make his much-anticipated move to heavyweight. Shortly after Jones said no to Nunn, he said yes to a bout with former world heavyweight champion Buster Douglas. But as it turned out, Jones must have had his fingers crossed, and, at the advice of his supposedly estranged father, turned his back on a verbally agreed upon $6-million payday. Jones said his dad told him fighting Douglas would mean "risking his life." Funny, but that would seem to be a fear most boxers should have overcome before entering their 10th year as a professional.

It was the same old Roy Jones, still not

ready to commit himself to furthering his career. But then, in March, a funny thing happened. The Whitaker-Quartey April 25 HBO superfight was canceled, and Jones filled the date by signing to fight Virgil Hill. Maybe Jones was sick of hearing how much of a disappointment he'd been to HBO, and he wanted to do the cable network a favor. Maybe he just felt $3.5-million was the right price for the risk light-punching veteran Hill presented. Either way, he bailed HBO out, and he returned to action in spectacular style, landing a brutal right hand to the ribs in round four to become the first man ever to kayo Hill.

But that performance alone did not prove that Jones was in any hurry to finally make himself more fan-friendly, especially considering that at the postfight press conference he was still saying things like, "This game is not a good game for any of us."

And then, in June, it happened again. Hamed pulled out of a July 18 date with McKinney, and Jones answered the call. Former sparring partner and reigning WBA light heavy champ Lou Del Valle had been hounding Jones as persistently as anybody, and the unification match was signed (somehow, in this whole mess, Jones had been renamed WBC champion even though the Hill fight was an over-the-weight, non-title bout, and Rocchigiani relegated to "interim champion" status). Del Valle was perceived to be among the most difficult opponents Jones could hope to find in the 175-pound ranks, making boxing's most reluctant warrior suddenly emerge as the most active and devoted of boxing's superstars.

And the fight itself was surprisingly entertaining. It was assumed that, depending on which Roy Jones showed up, the result would either be a quick blowout or a dull walkthrough, with the 29-year-old Jones never in much danger either way. But Bronx-native Del Valle came to fight, and the crowd of 4,519 at The Theater at Madison Square Garden got their money's worth.

Though Jones, 175, controlled the first three rounds, the 30-year-old Del Valle, 175, made the stronger statement by shrugging off repeated left hooks and right crosses from the WBC champ. Del Valle stunned Jones with a thudding left to open the fourth, and landed two more clean left crosses over the rest of the round, showing that there was more to his repertoire than just defense.

Jones had built a considerable lead by the seventh round, but the WBA champion of Puerto Rican heritage was still very much in the fight until an accidental clash of heads late in the round left Del Valle gashed over the left eye and visibly frustrated at the possibility that a cut could affect the outcome of the fight.

But in the eighth, the complexion of the fight—and of Jones' entire career—suddenly changed. Del Valle landed a perfect left to the jaw, and Jones wobbled. As he tried to reset his footing, Jones lost his balance completely, and crashed to the canvas for the first official knockdown of his career. He got up just three seconds into referee Jim Santa's count more angry than hurt, but didn't throw another serious punch the rest of the round. In fact, Jones was very passive right up until the 12th round, when he dazzled the crowd with an entertaining blend of spirited showboating and accurate combination punching.

The three American judges, Marty Denkin, Fred Ucci, and Dwayne Ford, scored 118-109, 118-109, and 119-108, respectively, all for Jones, but the scores didn't matter much. What did matter was that Jones, 37-1 (31), had come to fight, but still looked vulnerable. He couldn't knock out Del Valle, 27-2 (19), but he did mesmerize the crowd at times, and the reasonable doubt as to whether Jones is as untouchable as he once was can only make his future fights more attractive.

At the postfight press conference, Jones uttered three words that caused more than a few journalistic jaws to drop: "I enjoy fighting." The phrase was casually slipped in among assorted comments regarding the fact that Jones didn't really want to face a former sparring partner, but there it was. Has Jones' philosophy changed that much in just a few months?

Whether the new, likable Jones is the real Roy or just a front to gain long-overdue acceptance is hard to say. But, regardless, he's making boxing better at a time when the Sweet Science needed someone to do just that. Jones' ego appears to be in check, as he allowed Del Valle to be introduced last by ring announcer Michael Buffer even though Jones was the main attraction. He's not ditching press conferences or showing up in the Big Apple just two days before the fight. In fact, he was spotted at a public sparring session the week of the fight dancing, looking like he was having fun, and generally promoting himself and the event. Jones has been surprisingly open with the media recently, revealing for the first time his split personality in a May interview with *KO Magazine*. And he's even coming off as an all-out good guy by taking the Del Valle fight in part because it gave him leverage to get his friend, featherweight Derrick Gainer, his long-pursued rematch with Kevin Kelley on the same card.

And best of all for boxing purists, Jones took a step toward unifying the light heavyweight title, making him the only fighter besides Holyfield to presently hold two recognized belts. As the WBC and WBA titlist, Jones needs only the IBF title held by Reggie Johnson to become the undisputed champion, and Jones' promoter, Murad Muhammad, hinted after the fight that "Sweet Reggie" could be on Jones' docket soon. A title unification match with Johnson would be tremendous for Jones and for boxing. As would a shot at Holyfield, which Del Valle believes his conqueror should be favored to win.

"I always said if he fights Holyfield, he'd beat Holyfield, too, because Roy really is that fast," Del Valle said. "Speed is the whole game. I know Roy Jones makes a lot of mistakes, but he makes up for it with his speed and his power."

Del Valle's opinion is not the most popular one in this case, especially after seeing Jones struggle at times against "The Honey Boy," but the Holyfield-Jones matchup is so intriguing it would surely sell well on pay-per-view. Holyfield has always sold well against attractive opponents, and Jones is beginning to look more and more attractive. His fight with Del Valle scored an 11.6 rating on HBO, up from 10.1 for his knockout of Hill. Only De La Hoya's June fight against Patrick Charpentier pulled in a better boxing rating for the premium channel in '98. WBC heavyweight champ Lewis, who most consider the most appealing opponent for Holyfield, only garnered a 9.3 rating for his March fight with Shannon Briggs. So while Lewis-Holyfield may be a better fight—and is definitely a more important

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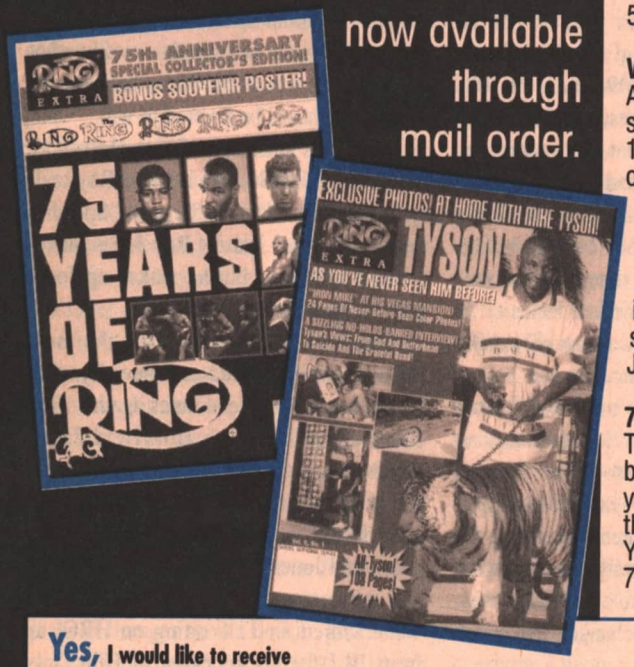

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Roy Jones

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fight for boxing—Jones-Holyfield has the potential to be every bit as big an event based on early indications as to how the public is taking to the fan-friendly Jones.

"If it's good for me, I'll do it. If it's not good for me, I won't do it," Jones said after decisioning Del Valle, reiterating his standard response to any question regarding what fights await him. And while that's still his main approach to deciding what fights to take, he seems also to be factoring in what's good for his friends, what's good for HBO, and, incidentally, what's good for boxing. ■

New Faces

(Continued from page 16)

tioned the 5'6" Attah to Burgess at Finley's Gym in Washington, D.C., where IBF flyweight champion Mark Johnson trains. Soon after, Burgess came into the gym and noticed a smallish kid hitting the heavybag. Jim Finley, the owner of the gym, told Burgess that's the kid Utuk wanted him to meet.

"It turned out to be a good blind date," Burgess recalled. "I noticed the way Daniel worked the bag, his hand speed. You could tell he had ability. He's still young right now. I try to protect him, and sometimes I don't. I'm not afraid to throw him against anyone. If he's going to have any mishaps, I want him to have them now. A lot of guys we said we would fight, they don't want to fight us. We'll fight anyone with a 14-0, 15-0 record."

Burgess, as well as co-trainers Bo Johnson and Darryl Tyson, a former junior welterweight contender who fought Oscar De La Hoya in 1996, have been concentrating on Attah's adjustment from the amateurs to the pros. Attah kept going to the head, and not enough to the body. He had a bad habit of leaving his jab hanging out, and sometimes kept his gloves too close to his chin. The Prophet also absorbed too many punches, instead of flicking punches away or catching them. Still, according to Johnson, Attah has great defensive instincts—when he remembers to use them. He's also a chameleon, able to imitate a number of boxers' styles, from De La Hoya, to Pernell Whitaker, Naseem Hamed, Roy Jones, and Mark Johnson.

When Burgess first started working with him, he nicknamed Attah "The Viper" because of his ability to strike quickly. But Attah did not necessarily like the moniker, so Burgess thought of something befitting Attah's personality—hence, "The Prophet." And while his religious beliefs have grounded Attah, they've also been somewhat of a hindrance. Attah, you see, is a nice guy. Sometimes maybe a little too mellow around fight time, say, right before he steps through the ropes.

"Before a fight, we pray that everyone comes out all right," Burgess said. "Boxing is a hurting game. Sometimes I have to express that to Daniel, that if his opponent is out to hurt you, he'll hurt you. Daniel's still struggling with that. Myself and Bo, we try to relate to Daniel that you can't be too nice of a guy. I found myself telling him even though that's his fellow man, it's part of the job he's doing. It's not about hating the other man.

"Daniel's really afraid of hurting someone real bad. Everyone always speaks about the killer instinct a fighter needs. We can't express that to Daniel in that tone; it gets to him. We have to watch what we say, because Daniel doesn't want to kill anyone. We have to change our philosophy to get a certain type of effort out of him."

Gospel music motivates Attah, and Johnson calls him a warrior with a soft heart. He's grown accustomed to squeezing into tight areas when Attah prays.

"Daniel says he doesn't want to hurt anyone right before he gets into the ring," Johnson said. "When he spars, he's very careful with opponents, but I have to say this, the better the competition, the better he fights. Daniel's very talented. We tend to have problems bringing his ability out.

(Continued on page 60)

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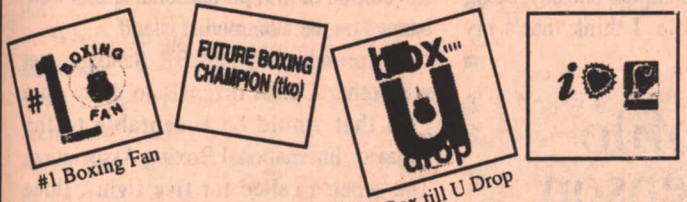

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New Faces

(Continued from page 59)

He's the kind of kid that stays to himself. He trains hard and stays in church."

Attah has also caught the eye of a certain trainer in Finley's, namely Ham Johnson, the father, trainer, and manager of "Too Sharp." Ham sees potential in Attah. All Attah needs, Ham feels, are more fights against quality opponents. But there are some things missing.

"The kid needs help and confidence within himself," said Ham, who has worked with Attah on occasion. "Burgess, Bo, Tyson, we believe in him. He needs to be brought up to the next level, and he needs to be taught how to be patient. Once he does that, he'll be fine. He has skills. The thing I like about Daniel is that he's a good kid, he has a good personality. Right now, the kid's a strong, young man. He needs to work the body the way he's supposed to, and he seems confused when he gets inside. You have to fight this guy though."

Attah's genteel nature in the ring is often confusing to opponents. He doesn't believe it would help him to lose his temper in the ring. Attah feels if a fighter loses control, he's had it. So when he gets hit hard, he smiles.

"I don't hit someone as my enemy," Attah said in his thick Nigerian accent. "I act very friendly in the ring. Sometimes it makes opponents mad, and they lose their concentration. I always like to stay relaxed and in control. I think boxing is something God has given me, that's my gift. God blessed me, it's for the glory and purpose of Him that I do this. I made a promise to myself of being a champion one day, being the head of the table. I think that's my blessing." ■

Teofilo Stevenson

(Continued from page 25)

tournaments and the Olympics between 1971 and '86, with losses to Duane Bobick, Francesco Damiani, and Craig Payne.) The other third was the fight that never materialized with Ali in 1978, according Menendez, who wrote a lengthy article on the subject for *Juventud Rebelde* in '91.

Stevenson's interest in Ali is more than casual. Eager to establish a link between the two former world champions, the big man clumsily thumbed through a stack of color photos of him and The Greatest at Ali's Chicago home in '96. As some of the pictures spilled onto the kitchen floor, Stevenson eagerly made the point that Ali is his friend. He never mentioned the fact that they had come close to fighting each other 20 years ago. But others close to Stevenson, including Menendez and former Cuban Boxing Federation president Waldo Santiago, are quite familiar with the details of the misadventure, some of which have not been revealed until now.

Inside his sweltering office at Havana's Olympic Stadium three days earlier, Santiago, 58, trainer of Cuba's National Boxing Team (17-19 age group), had recounted the story of the contract negotiations between the two most famous fighters in the world.

As early as 1968, when the Cuban boxer was only 16, interest in the fight had surfaced in Mexico City during the Olympics. Ali, 26, was inactive at the time, stripped of the world heavyweight title for refusing to enter the military draft. Nothing came of the talk, but in '75, at the Pan-American Games in the same city, the idea was revived, and flourished among boxing people in New York and Havana. Ali was champ again, and the Cubans really wanted to put their best boxer against him because they thought Stevenson could win. But there was one big stumbling block. Stevenson would have to fight as an amateur because after the Cuban Revolution of '59, professional sports were banned on the Communist island.

As president of the CBF, Santiago met with other Cuban officials to draw up a plan that would be acceptable to the Amateur International Boxing Association. The scheme called for five fights, three rounds each, to take place in five U.S. cities to be named by American promoter Ben Thompson. The bouts were to occur every other day, with an international referee, under amateur rules. If either fighter stopped the other, the series was over.

The AIBA rejected the plan presented by Santiago in 1975 and '77, but during the world championships the following

year in Belgrade, the amateur body had a change of heart when executive committee member Col. Donald Hull, an American, agreed to the proposal.

"It was like an atomic bomb dropped," said Santiago through the interpretation of Morales. "Never before had the Americans and Cubans agreed." The cagey ex-boxer added with a twinkle and a whisper: "The plan was Fidel's, and that's a great secret [which cost me $20]. The only condition Fidel wanted was that Teofilo keep his amateur status."

The white-haired, mustachioed Menendez, who has been writing about boxing for 38 of his 68 years, said he knew nothing about Castro's involvement in the 19-page contract drawn up by Cuban attorney Mario Rivas Patterson with the help of Santiago. However, the respected scribe recalled that Stevenson's purse would not be his to keep.

According to Mendoza's February 17, 1991, article, "Fight Of The Century, The Fight That Never Happened," purses of $3-million and $1.5-million were to be paid to Ali and Stevenson, respectively. However, Stevenson's money was to go to the Cuban Boxing Federation. Furthermore, the American promoter was to give the CBF 50 ringside seats, 50 first-class plane tickets, and 50 rooms in a first-class hotel. That's first-class Communism, another contradiction.

On September 27, 1978, 12 days after Ali regained the title he'd lost to Leon Spinks, Santiago and Thompson signed the document, which slated the first fight for February 28, 1979, in New York City. Ali was to sign on October 13, 1978, but, according to the article, he failed to show up, .

While sitting in the living room of Menendez' West Havana home, Santiago recalled that Ali, whom he and the writer occasionally call Clay, had telephoned an AIBA lawyer in Havana and declined the fight because he said he had nothing to win and everything to lose by fighting an amateur.

"Clay offered to give Teofilo money because Clay wouldn't take the fight," Santiago said. "But Teofilo refused, saying he didn't need the money. I don't know how much it was."

Santiago and Menendez agreed that "The Louisville Lip" would have beaten Stevenson in a 15-round fight. "Ali fought like a dancer with knockout power," Santiago said. "Everyone looked at Ali like he was Superman, and they wanted to take care of Teofilo."

However, both men felt that in a series of three-round fights with amateur rules, the Cuban would have won because of his youth and ability. A standup, classic boxer, the tall, rangy heavyweight had disposed of America's Olympic hopefuls, beginning with Duane Bobick in 1972 and ending with Alex Garcia in '86. In between, he had beaten Marvin Stinson in '74, Michael Dokes in '75, Tate in '76, Tony Tubbs in '78, Jimmy Clark in '80, and Tyrell Biggs in '82 and '84.

Santiago and Menendez joked about drawing up another contract for the retired boxer, who is now vice president of the CBF and a member of the National Institute of Sports and Physical Culture. "Foreman and Holmes are in a grandfather's fight," Menendez said. "Teofilo is not a grandfather yet."

Stevenson is the father of two children, daughter Helmys and son David. Helmys, 14, was born to him and his first wife, Merceditas, a teacher. David, 2, was born to him and Fraymaris, who were married five years ago. The second wife wasn't real pleased with her husband's behavior that Monday night, abruptly pulling away from him when he got a little rough while posing for a photo. She and two friends sat quietly in front of the TV, watching a video about Stevenson's life, and when it ended prematurely, they continued to look at a blank screen as he rambled on from the back of the room. They looked bored and anxious, but sat there dutifully, as though they had done so many times in the past.

When Stevenson saw that there were only four shots left in the camera, he clicked them off wildly. That was our cue to go, and as he accompanied us to the car, the big man once again asked for money for an interview. He started at $175 and dropped down to $50 (which I didn't have) as he clung to the chain-link fence and spoke like a child begging for an allowance.

Childlike and undependable are words used to describe Stevenson by those who know him. But they embrace him as their

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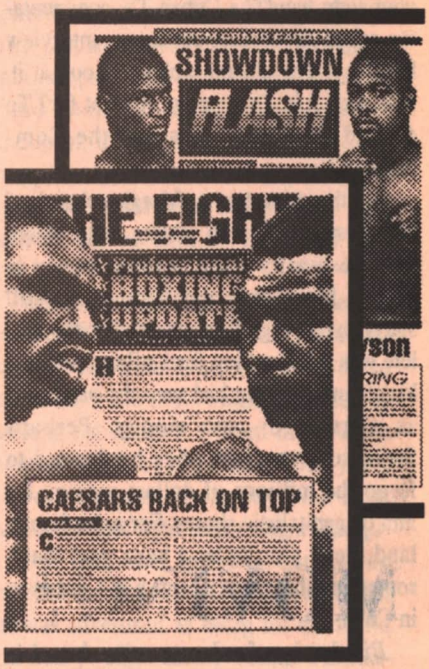

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Teofilo Stevenson

(Continued from page 61)

hero and excuse his behavior. For he is unique among Cubans in sacrificing great personal wealth to the cause and the Commandante.

"Tell me, champion, how do you keep your right hand?" a Cuban TV commentator asked Stevenson during an interview last May. The champ replied: "Look at it, how well it is. Do you know what for? To defend the Revolution and the Commander."

On the drive home, Morales theorized that Castro's favorite athlete, with whom he occasionally dines, wanted money to give to his friends and family. The still starry-eyed Augelli assumed that the athlete was really asking for a tribute befitting his stature. Neither had seen the pandering as a grab for rum money. Perhaps Stevenson was right when he decided to forgo the millions of dollars waiting for him on capitalistic shores. For in his homeland, he'll always be a hero, and that's something that money can't buy—not even in Cuba. ■

Bill Iezzi, a freelance writer based in Philadelphia, has visited Cuba four times, spending more than two months on the island.

Team Freedom

(Continued from page 29)

"It's very difficult because my family can't be around to watch me succeed," Hurtado said. "I know I'm doing what my mother told me, and acting how my mother raised me. That makes me feel a little better about the situation of my mother not being here. She knows I'm doing the right thing, and being the person she always wanted me to be."

Garbey and Casamayor made the front page of the *New York Times* when they decided to defect, just prior to the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta. Neither was aware of the other's plans. They both said they were leaving Cuba for political reasons, but Casamayor hinted there were training abuses. After beating Ireland's Wayne McCullough for the gold medal at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics, he said he was forced to stay at 119 the for next four years. He's fighting professionally at 130 and has a healthy appetite.

"This is a free country with plenty of food," Casamayor said through an interpreter. "In Cuba there is no such freedom. You don't always get what you need to eat. This has been very difficult, though. Like last Sunday [July 12], it was my birthday, and I called my mother. It was very hard, I got emotional talking on the phone."

On the other hand, Garbey, whose appreciation for American cuisine is evident by the extra flab he carries around his waist, says he found the change in lifestyle relatively easy to make.

"I try not to let people know, but deep down, I do miss my family," Garbey said. "It's really sad. I hope they could see me box for a championship one day."

Most of Team Freedom lives in the Hialeah, Florida, area, which has become more like a suburb of Cuba. It's totally Cuban, with Cuban food and Cuban shops. Ledon, however, lives in Las Vegas. Regardless of where they are and what they've accomplished, some team members still can't help feeling people are watching. There is some relief, though. Hurtado's neighbors don't have to worry about safeguarding their trash cans anymore. ■

Tapia-Romero II

(Continued from page 33)

keep his emotions in check, and use them to his advantage, in the first meeting. Romero seemed unable to break out of his shell. Before a boisterous Albuquerque crowd, however, Tapia might have trouble containing himself. His desire to put on a show and please the fans might work against him with the pressure of fighting at home. Romero, with the added incentive of revenge, might be inspired to take more chances.

THE INTANGIBLES: Romero was a relative neophyte last summer, a bright prospect who had never participated in such a high-profile event. Tapia was a much more seasoned veteran, with a greater depth of experience to draw upon. Having been through the hype that comes with a major event once, did Romero learn some lessons that will serve him well?

Tapia's stability is always a question. His showboating in the first fight was an example of his enthusiasm and thirst for acceptance, but he always walks a fine line in trying to harness his seemingly endless supply of energy. Can he once again take control of his emotions, or will Romero find a way to turn them against him this time?

Can either man find a way to land a telling blow that will turn the fight in his favor this time? Tapia basically turned the first meeting into a boxing match as the rounds wore on, taking the best punches Romero landed and usually answering with bursts of speed before the youngster could capitalize. If either is able to do major damage, the battle could take a different course.

THE OUTCOME: Rematches are always full of intrigue, but no clear pattern has emerged over the course of time. Evander Holyfield beat Mike Tyson once, and gave every indication he was going to do it again before Tyson snapped in their return bout. Muhammad Ali lost to Joe Frazier the first time, but reversed the outcome twice. Floyd Patterson split a pair of meetings with Ingemar Johansson, but was wiped out twice in consecutive matches with Sonny Liston.

The safest bet is that Tapia will once again have a relatively easy time with Romero if he doesn't fall prey to his own emotions. His slick-boxing style seems made for a bomber like Romero, and an even bolder effort by the challenger would seem to only play more into the champion's hands.

Romero figures to try to set a faster pace, forcing the action early in an effort to hit home with his fearsome right. Tapia will get on his toes and box smartly, using his jab and angles to confuse and frustrate the youngster. As Romero begins to get desperate in the middle rounds, he will be more open for Tapia's precise counters. The champ will begin to zero in on Romero's vulnerable eyes, raising swelling and eventually opening a nasty cut over the left orb.

By the ninth round, Romero's vision will be hopelessly impaired. When Tapia takes advantage by ripping off a series of laser-guided rights, the referee will be forced to halt the action. ■

Fitzsimmons vs. Hall

(Continued from page 45)

a petition to halt the fight on the grounds that it was illegal, immoral, inhumane, and a blot on the civic escutcheon. Prize fights had been going on in St. Paul for years without protest or incident, said the mayor, including in the gymnasium of the YMCA!

Getting nowhere at City Hall, the anti-fight fighters turned to the churches, where they got a more receptive hearing. In their July 19 sermons denouncing pugilism, local ministers announced a rally against the fight that same evening at Newmarket Theatre. Archbishop Ireland and Episcopol Bishop Mahlon Gilbert were the main event, and 5,000 persons turned out to cheer and sign another petition, this one to be presented to Gov. Merriam the following morning. But then it was decided that there was no time like the present, and all 5,000 protesters marched forthwith to the State Capitol, trampling flower beds and demanding to see the governor. Merriam refused to appear, but said he would accept the petition in the morning.

If the chief executive hoped for a more decorous meeting then, he got a rude shock at 10:30 a.m., when 500 protesters, mostly women, swarmed through the outer offices of the governor's suite to confront him at his desk with their demand that Fitzsimmons-Hall be prevented "for the credit and morality of the state."

The invasion of the State Capitol was front page news in the *New York Times* the next day, where it was written that "the Governor was the center of a struggling, writhing mass of humanity, for all the world like the crush around a referee of a prize fight after a doubtful decision." Under the circumstances, Gov. Merriam did the politic thing—he sent the Attorney General. The latter, in turn, passed the buck to the mayor, maintaining that it was the responsibility of the municipality in which an illegal fight would be held to prevent it.

Merriam helpfully issued a general proclamation reminding Mayor Smith of his legal obligation, and the crowd headed straight for City Hall. But Smith was not there, a spokesman said. He was either fishing or horseback riding "for his health."

That afternoon, the governor met secretly with Sheriff Bean and suggested that arresting everybody connected with the bout after it was over would both "satisfy the law and not interfere with the pleasure of the great number of people who had come thousands of miles to see the contest." At 3 p.m. that same day, Police Chief John Clark had Fitzsimmons and his trainers arrested at White Bear Lake, and charged them with intending to violate the statute against prize fighting. Fitz and company posted $500 bail and left smiling. "It is known they will pay no attention to this action of the court," reported the newspaper.

That the fight would go on notwithstanding the last-minute legal hoop jumping was considered such a sure thing that even while Gov. Merriam was under siege at his office, MAC officer Frank Shaw was at the Twin City Jockey Club offering to wager $10,000 that there would be no interference on Wednesday night. He got no takers.

The supreme confidence of the fight crowd seemed especially well-founded on the eve of the great battle when both of the Twin Cities hosted public boxing matches, each of which came off without a hitch. Neither had drawn a breath of protest beforehand, either. God, it seemed, was a fight fan after all.

But in the opposing corner for the big match was, if not God, then at least a local deity in Archbishop Ireland, a popular and powerful force in the entire state. "Were it not for the fact that [he] is practically at the head of the opposition movement," it was written, "not the slightest uneasiness would be manifested by the promoters ... "

Their uneasiness was well-founded. The Archbishop had a direct pipeline to the State Capitol, and by the morning of the fight, Gov. Merriam had been born again. He summoned Sheriff Bean and ordered him to halt the fight. Then, to demonstrate the genuineness of his conversion, he called out the National Guard.

That evening the only skirmish taking place at the brand new MAC arena occurred when the four companies of the 1st Regiment arrived to take control of the facility and booted out a watchman. One hundred sentries with drawn bayonets ringed the building to keep the milling crowd out.

Rather than risk bloodshed, the MAC acquiesced. In a bitter statement, Cowles denounced that state for not objecting to the fight "before a dollar of expense had been incurred." Fitzsimmons and Hall got $1,500 forfeit pay, and the club lost $14,000. After a night rampant with rumors that the fight would come off across the border in Wisconsin, the pugilists and thousands of disappointed ticketholders departed the Gopher State, and peace and morality were restored. At least until the next prize fight there.

Fitzsimmons and Hall finally did meet on March 8, 1893, in New Orleans. Fitz won by fourth-round knockout, and went on to become the world heavyweight champion by knocking out James J. Corbett in 1897. On September 25, 1899, almost four years before the record books say Jack Root became the first light heavyweight champion, Jim Hall was knocked out by Joe Choynski in Louisville, Kentucky, in a fight that was advertised as being for the world light heavyweight championship. Fitzsimmons won that title, too, in 1903.

In death as in life, The Fighting Blacksmith fared better than his old rival. Upon his passing on October 22, 1917, the three-time champion was buried under a marble monument in Chicago's Graceland Cemetery. Fifty-six years later, the Illinois Veteran Boxer's Association erected a stone of red granite decorated with two ceramic photos of Fitzsimmons, one of them showing him in his famous fighting stance.

Jim Hall died on March 9, 1913, in Wisconsin. Wasted by alcoholism, he had tuberculosis, and newspaper accounts said he was living "in a hovel" in Neenah, a city about 70 miles north of Milwaukee. Hall was broke, and area boxing enthusiasts arranged for his burial in Oak Cemetery. But there is no stone to mark the plot. A century ago, Jim Hall's name was on the front pages of newspapers all over the world, but now it isn't even on his grave. ■

Pete Ehrmann is a freelance writer based in West Allis, Wisconsin, and is a regular contributor to this magazine.

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BOXING COLLECTOR'S NOTEBOOK

By Don Scott

Recently, my publication, *Boxing Collectors' News*, celebrated its 10th anniversary. After 10 years of *BCN* and nearly eight before that collecting and writing about boxing memorabilia, I guess I have seen it all. But then again, if I'd really seen it all, I would have stopped writing and collecting by now. It seems like there is always something new and different turning up.

This past year saw some doozies. The rarest and most valuable boxing program of the 20th century sold recently for big bucks. It was from the Jack Johnson-Stanley Ketchel fight in 1909, which, according to legend, was to be an exhibition of sorts (though billed as a heavyweight championship fight). Ketchel got bold and decked Johnson, who immediately got up and pulverized the upstart middleweight. You just never see memorabilia from that fight.

Some rare signatures surfaced recently also. Chief among them were personal postcards sent from Ketchel to his parents and, likewise, some postcards sent back to the States by Sam MacVea when he was in Europe. It is one thing to collect something obviously sent in response to an autograph request, and quite another to have a card picked out by the athlete himself.

Willie Pep auctioned off his two RING championship belts this past year, and they were hammered down for about $11,000 each. Oddly, Ray Robinson's RING belt has come onto the market as well, with an asking price several times that of Pep's. It is certainly rare for two legends' belts to appear in a year.

A rare John L. Sullivan card popped up at a recent auction and sold for $700. Before you start scrambling for the attic, let me say there are lots of Sullivan cards out there that are worth very little. This one was made by the Kinney Tobacco Company in the late-1880s or early-1890s, and I had never seen one before. A couple of rare James J. Corbett cards emerged as well, one by Fair Play Tobacco, and one from Little Rhody Cut Plug. Both are pre-1900, but only fetched about $200 each.

Speaking of rare, the Nonpareil Jack Dempsey-George LaBlanche fight contract was resold this past year for more than $5,000. Several other fight contracts also surfaced, including a few from assorted Salvador Sanchez fights.

Off the topic of rarities and onto the topic of new souvenirs, the city of Shelby, Montana, had its 75th anniversary of the Jack Dempsey-Tommy Gibbons fight this past July 4. There are some great souvenirs still on sale from that event, including a money clip, bolo tie, medallion, and some paper items including a replica poster, program, and postcards. Write them at Marias Museum, Box 895, Shelby, MT 59474 for a list and prices.

The collectors show held at the International Boxing Hall of Fame was a resounding success, and this year seemed to be the year of the photo. Everywhere you looked, guys had vintage photos for sale, particularly old press and wire photos. These are harder to sell through the mail since the look of these is so important and they sell for relatively little, but when you are able to thumb through hundreds of them at a time in person, well, few can resist. I love the photo I purchased of Lee Carillo (Pancho in the old *Cisco Kid* show) in Mexican costume, clowning with a young Max Baer at a nightclub in 1934, or the large original Apeda Studio photo I got, a bust shot of a pensive Harry Greb.

RING *Record Books* were also good sellers at the show. The good thing about these old gems is that they aren't just collectibles, but are excellent references for the true boxing fan. Most volumes after the '40s were going for as little as $35.

The IBHOF in Canastota, New York, did very well selling signed gloves this year. You can be certain these gloves have authentic signatures, and all contain a stamped Hall of Fame logo inside and come with a certificate. The signed glove became one of the most collected items in the hobby this past year. Some collectors only pursue gloves with a single signature, and a couple of these guys have hundreds of them.

While I hate to end this column on a sad note, I would be remiss if I did not mention the passing of a personal friend of mine as well as a great friend to the sport and hobby. Collector and dealer Lyle Whiteman took the final count recently. Lyle ran some great small auctions and loved the "stuff." In a hobby as small as ours, with the camaraderie that we collectors have, he will be particularly missed. ■

Don Scott is editor and publisher of ***Boxing Collectors' News*** *and can be reached at 3316 Luallen Dr., Carrollton, TX 75007. He asks that a self-addressed stamped envelope accompany any requests for opinions or appraisals.*

WORLDWIDE RATINGS

The ratings of the three major governing bodies recognized by The Ring are supplied by the organizations themselves. They are updated on these pages as soon as they are made available to us. In this issue, the WBA ratings were compiled as of May 1998, the WBC as of July 1998, and the IBF as of July 1998.

HEAVYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Lennox Lewis (GB)	C	–	–
Evander Holyfield (USA)	–	C	C
Zeljko Mavrovic (CROA)	1	2	7
Ray Mercer (USA)	2	3	4
John Ruiz (USA)	3	4	–
Oliver McCall (USA)	4	–	–
David Tua (NZ)	5	–	–
Larry Donald (USA)	6	–	10
Wladimir Klitchko (UKR)	7	–	–
Axel Schulz (GER)	8	–	–
Jerry Ballard (USA)	9	–	12
Michael Grant (USA)	10	7	8
Henry Akinwande (GB)	–	1	5
Jade Scott (USA)	17	5	–
Kirk Johnson (CAN)	–	6	–
Michael Moorer (USA)	20	8	6
Orlin Norris (USA)	–	9	–
Vaughn Bean (USA)	–	10	1
Francois Botha (SA)	24	–	2
Hasim Rahman (USA)	25	–	3
Chris Byrd (USA)	15	–	9

CRUISERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Juan Carlos Gomez (CUBA)	C	–	–
Fabrice Tiozzo (FRA)	–	C	–
Imamu Mayfield (USA)	–	–	C
Jacob Mofokeng (SA)	1	9	3
Alexei Ilin (RUS)	2	–	–
Marcelo Dominguez (ARG)	3	–	–
Nate Miller (USA)	4	2	6
Dale Brown (CAN)	5	–	–
Arthur Williams (USA)	6	3	1
Darren Corbett (IRE)	7	4	5
Vassiliy Jirov (KAZ)	8	12	10
Ken Murphy (USA)	9	6	4
Kenny Keene (USA)	10	–	–
Ezequiel Paixao (BRA)	–	1	–
Robert Daniels (USA)	13	5	–
Stefan Anghem (SWI)	12	7	7
Tiwon Taylor (USA)	24	8	8
Valery Vikhor (LAT)	–	10	–
Vacant	–	–	2
Uriah Grant (USA)	–	–	9

LT. HEAVYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Roy Jones (USA)	C	1	–
Lou Del Valle (USA)	11	C	–
Reggie Johnson (USA)	–	–	C
Graciano Rocchigiani (GER)	C	–	–
Richard Frazier (USA)	1	4	6
Montell Griffin (USA)	2	11	9
Derrick Harmon (USA)	3	–	12
Michael Nunn (USA)	4	–	–
Muhammad Siluvangi (ZAI)	5	3	7
Jorge Castro (ARG)	6	–	–
Fabian Chancelay (ARG)	7	9	–
Mark Prince (GB)	8	–	–
Henry Wharton (GB)	9	–	–
Hisashi Teraji (JAP)	10	–	–
Dario Matteoni (ARG)	25	2	–
Richard Hall (USA)	22	5	4
Ken Bowman (USA)	13	6	–
Virgil Hill (USA)	–	7	–
Anthony Bigeni (AUS)	–	8	–
Ole Klemetsen (NOR)	–	10	11
Vacant	–	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Will Taylor (USA)	18	–	3
Mark Prince (GB)	–	–	5
David Telesco (USA)	24	12	8
Yosukezan Nishijima (JAP)	–	–	10

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Richie Woodhall (GB)	C	–	–
Frank Liles (USA)	–	C	–
Charles Brewer (USA)	–	–	C
Vincenzo Nardiello (ITA)	1	–	–
Robin Reid (GB)	2	–	12
Dean Francis (GB)	3	–	11
Thomas Tate (USA)	4	4	4
Eric Lucas (CAN)	5	5	–
Antoine Byrd (USA)	6	10	–
Omar Sheika (USA)	7	–	–
Chris Johnson (CAN)	8	–	–
Bruno Girard (FRA)	10	1	–
Dean Francis (GB)	–	2	–
Mauricio Amaral (BRA)	–	3	3
Andrei Shkalikov (RUS)	29	6	–
Herol Graham (GB)	–	7	–
Jorge Castro (ARG)	–	8	–
Antoine Byrd (USA)	–	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Demetrius Davis (USA)	14	–	5
Reginaldo Andrade (BRA)	12	–	7
Byron Mitchell (USA)	17	11	8
Rick Thornberry (AUST)	–	–	9
Robert Coehlo (BRA)	25	–	10

MIDDLEWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Hassine Cherifi (FRA)	C	–	–
William Joppy (USA)	11	C	–
Bernard Hopkins (USA)	–	–	C
Stephane Ouelette (CAN)	1	11	–
Robert McCracken (GB)	2	5	3
Keith Holmes (USA)	3	–	7
Julio Cesar Vazquez (ARG)	4	–	–
Kevin Palmer (USA)	5	–	–
Antwun Echols (USA)	6	–	–
Robert Allen (USA)	7	2	1
Agostino Cardamone (ITA)	8	12	–
Paul Vaden (USA)	9	–	–
Alex Zaitzev (RUS)	10	–	–
Darren Obah (AUSTRL)	–	1	–
Peter Venancio (BRA)	23	3	9
Julio Cesar Green (DR)	–	4	6
Antwun Echols (USA)	–	6	–
Roberto Duran (PAN)	–	7	–
Giovanni Pretorius (SA)	13	8	4
Abdula Ramadan (CAN)	–	9	10
Anthony Andrews (GUY)	20	10	5
Antwun Echols (USA)	–	–	2
Urbano Gurrola (MEX)	–	–	8

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Keith Mullings (USA)	C	–	–
Laurent Boudouani (FRA)	–	C	–
Yori Boy Campas (MEX)	–	–	C
Javier Castillejo (SPA)	1	–	10
Tony Marshall (USA)	2	3	–
David Reid (USA)	3	8	9
Davide Ciarlante (ITA)	4	–	–
Terry Norris (USA)	5	–	–
Kookyui Song (KOR)	6	–	–
James Coker (USA)	7	–	–
Fernando Vargas (USA)	8	–	1
Said Bennajem (FRA)	9	–	–
Jose Alfredo Flores (MEX)	10	–	–
Guillermo Jones (PAN)	–	1	–
Kevin Kelly (USA)	12	2	–
Tony Menefee (USA)	–	4	–
Pedro Ortega (MEX)	–	5	–
Jason Papillion (USA)	26	6	3
Mamadou Thiam (FRA)	24	7	–
Fernando Vargas (USA)	–	9	–
Andrew Murray (GUY)	–	10	5
Vacant	–	–	2
Earnie Artango (AUSTRL)	25	–	4
Raul Marquez (USA)	–	–	6
Aaron Davis (USA)	–	–	7
Emmett Linton (USA)	22	11	8

WELTERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Oscar De La Hoya (USA)	C	–	–
Ike Quartey (GHA)	–	C	–
Felix Trinidad (PR)	–	–	C
Derrell Coley (USA)	1	5	5
Julio Cesar Chavez (MEX)	2	–	–
James Page (USA)	3	6	12
Jose Luis Lopez (MEX)	4	3	–
Wilfredo Rivera (PR)	5	11	–
Nicolas Cervera (COL)	6	–	–
Shannan Taylor (AUSTRL)	7	8	11
Maxim Nesterenko (RUS)	8	–	–
Suk Hyun Yun (KOR)	9	–	–
Sergio Acuna (ARG)	10	–	–
Vacant	–	1	–
Andrei Pestraiev (RUS)	13	2	–
Oba Carr (USA)	11	4	–
Jeff Malcolm (AUSTRL)	–	7	–
Juan Negron (PR)	28	9	–
Jose A. Riveras (USA)	–	10	–
Vincent Pettway (USA)	–	–	1
Hugo Pineda (COL)	–	–	2
Raul Frank (USA)	–	–	3
Vernon Forrest (USA)	12	–	4
Mahenge Zulu (ZAI)	–	–	6
Juan Negron (PR)	–	–	7
Antonio Marqurito (MEX)	–	–	8
Walter Saporiti (ARG)	–	–	9
Adrian Stone (GB)	–	–	10

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Vacant	C	–	–
Khalid Rahilou (FRA)	–	C	–
Vince Phillips (USA)	–	–	C
Miguel Angel Gonzalez (MEX)	1	4	–
Kostya Tszyu (AUSTRL)	2	2	6
Rafael Ruelas (MEX)	3	–	–
Reggie Green (USA)	4	9	8
Diobelis Hurtado (CUB)	5	–	–
Jong Hoon Yuh (KOR)	6	–	–
Sharmba Mitchell (USA)	7	1	2
Ricardo Silva (ARG)	8	–	–
Justin Rowsell (AUSTRL)	9	–	–
Soren Sondergaard (DEN)	10	–	–
Julio Cesar Chavez (MEX)	–	3	–
Virgil McClendon (USA)	–	5	3
Freddy Rojas (CHILE)	20	6	5
Juan Coggi (ARG)	14	7	–
Elio Ortiz (VEN)	–	8	–
Junichi Ono (JAP)	–	10	–
Terron Millett (USA)	–	–	1
Zab Judah (USA)	25	11	4
Jonathan Thaxton (USA)	17	–	7
Rafael Ruelas (USA)	–	–	9
Alex Carillo (COL)	–	–	10

LIGHTWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Cesar Bazan (MEX)	C	–	–
Jean-Baptiste Mendy (FRA)	–	C	–
Shane Mosley (USA)	–	–	C
Hiroyuki Sakamoto (JAP)	1	–	–
Steve Johnston (USA)	2	–	10
Daomai Sithkodam (THAI)	3	–	–
Israel Cardona (USA)	4	5	2
Jong Kwon Baek (KOR)	5	–	–
Arturo Gatti (USA)	6	11	–
Rick Yoshimura (JAP)	7	7	–
Billy Schwer (GB)	8	4	9
Manuel Fernandes (FRA)	9	–	–
Lovemore Ndou (SA)	10	–	–
Alberto Sicurella (ARG)	–	1	–
Eduardo Morales (ARG)	–	2	1
Orzubek Nazarov (JAP)	–	3	–
Phillip Holiday (SA)	–	6	4
Ceppy Holman (INDO)	–	8	–
Manuel Fernandez (POR)	–	9	–
Angel Manfredy (USA)	–	10	–
Justin Rowsell (AUSTRL)	–	–	3
Leavander Johnson (USA)	–	–	5
Arturo Gatti (USA)	–	–	6
Ivan Robinson (USA)	–	–	7
Dario Esais (COL)	30	–	8

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Genaro Hernandez (USA)	C	–	–
Yong Soo Choi (KOR)	–	C	–
Robert Garcia (USA)	–	–	C
Jesus Chavez (USA)	1	–	–
Goyo Vargas (MEX)	2	–	–
Santos Rebolledo (VEN)	3	3	9
Justin Juuko (UGA)	4	4	8
Sirimongkol Singmanassuk (THAI)	5	–	–
Floyd Mayweather (USA)	6	10	–
Gabriel Ruelas (MEX)	7	–	–
Kengo Nagashima (JAP)	8	–	–
Carlos Hernandez (EL SALV)	9	12	–
Tom Johnson (USA)	10	9	–
Lakva Sim (MON)	25	1	–
Takanori Hatakeyama (JAP)	20	2	–
Gilbert Serrano (VEN)	–	5	–
Edson Xuxa Nacimento (BRA)	–	6	–
Antonio Hernandez (MEX)	–	7	–
Carlos Gerena (PR)	12	8	–
Vacant	–	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Ramon Ledon (CUBA)	–	–	3
Joel Casamayor (CUB)	11	–	4
Arnulfo Castillo (USA)	–	–	5
Harold Warren (USA)	–	–	6
Tracy Patterson (USA)	14	–	7
Juan Trinidad (PR)	–	–	10

FEATHERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Luisito Espinosa (PHIL)	C	–	–
Fred Norwood (USA)	–	C	–
Manuel Medina (MEX)	–	–	C
Cesar Soto (MEX)	1	2	8
Juan Manuel Marquez (MEX)	2	–	–
Paul Ingle (GB)	3	–	7
Derrick Gainer (USA)	4	–	–
Carlos Rios (ARG)	5	–	–
Pablo Chacon (ARG)	6	11	–
Dramane Nabaloun (BKF)	7	–	–
Takeo Imaoka (JAP)	8	–	–
Injin Chi (KOR)	9	–	–
Billy Hardy (GB)	10	9	–
Genaro Rios (NIC)	–	1	–
Victor Polo (COL)	–	3	1
Antonio Cermeno (VEN)	–	4	–
Frederic Perez (FRA)	–	5	–
Wilfredo Vazquez (PR)	–	6	–
Angel Vasquez (PR)	27	7	2
Chamopekt Chorchamuang (THAI)	–	8	–
Mbulelo Botile (SA)	–	10	3
Luis Mendoza (COL)	–	–	4
Jesus Chavez (USA)	–	–	5
Hector Lizarraga (USA)	–	–	6
Tony Wehbee (AUS)	22	–	9
Teofilo Carranza (PER)	–	–	10

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Erik Morales (MEX)	C	–	–
Enrique Sanchez (MEX)	–	C	–
Vuyani Bungu (SA)	–	–	C
Wayne McCullough (IRE)	1	–	–
Reynante Jamili (PHIL)	2	–	–
Guty Espadas (MEX)	3	6	–
Michael Brodie (GB)	4	12	4
Gerardo Martinez (MEX)	5	–	–
Junior Jones (USA)	6	–	–
Hector Acero-Sanchez (DR)	7	2	–
Jesus Salud (USA)	8	–	–
Sergio Aguila (MEX)	9	–	–
Kozo Ishii (JAP)	10	–	–
Carlos Barreto (VEN)	–	1	–
John Johnson (USA)	–	3	3
Sergei Devakov (UKR)	21	4	7
Rafael Del Valle (PR)	–	5	–
Serge Poilblan (FRA)	15	7	–
Bugiarso (INDO)	–	8	–
Lehlo Ledwaba (SA)	14	9	10
Abraham Torres (VEN)	–	10	–
Victor Llerena (COL)	–	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Salim Medjkoune (FRA)	–	–	5
Anell Barotillo (AUSTRL)	19	–	6
Ariston Clayton (USA)	13	–	8
Jose Mendoza (COL)	–	–	9

BANTAMWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Joichiro Tatsuyoshi (JAP)	C	–	–
Nana Konadu (GHA)	–	C	–
Tim Austin (USA)	–	–	C
Paul Ayala (USA)	1	2	12
Adan Vargas (MEX)	2	12	7
Dario Azuaga (PAR)	3	–	–
Danny Romero (USA)	4	–	–
Veerapol Sahaprom (THAI)	5	–	–
Cuauhtemoc Gomez (MEX)	6	9	–
John Michael Johnson (USA)	7	–	–
Oscar Garro (ARG)	8	–	–
Hugo Dianzo (MEX)	9	–	–
Jess Maca (PHIL)	10	–	–
Lukhin CP Gym (THAI)	–	1	–
Johnny Bredahl (DEN)	11	3	–
Yong Hoon Lee (KOR)	–	4	–
Sahoiu Phaisarn Gym (THA)	–	5	–
Johnny Armour (GB)	–	6	4
Gerardo Martinez (MEX)	–	7	–
Giovanni Andrade (BRA)	–	8	–
Jose Rojas (VEN)	–	10	–
Vacant	–	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Jesus Perez (COL)	24	–	3
Adrian Kaspari (INDO)	–	–	5
Albert Resilay (INDO)	–	–	6
Jorge Otero (COL)	–	–	8
Bernardo Mendoza (CHI)	–	–	9
Cesar Singo (ECU)	–	–	10

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Gerry Penalosa (PHIL)	C	–	–
Satoshi Iida (JAP)	–	C	–
Johnny Tapia (USA)	–	–	C
Joel Luna Zarate (MEX)	1	4	–
Luis Bolanos (COL)	2	12	–
Raffy Montalban (PHIL)	3	–	–
In Joo Cho (KOR)	4	9	–
Victor Godoy (ARG)	5	–	–
Keiji Yamaguchi (JAP)	6	–	–
Ratanachai Sor Voraphin (THAI)	7	11	2
Yokthai Sithoar (THAI)	8	2	–
Jose Rafael Sosa (ARG)	9	–	–
Pone Saengmorokot (THAI)	10	–	–
Julio Gamboa (NIC)	24	1	3
Veeraphol Sahaprom (THAI)	–	3	–
Evangelo Perez (PAN)	–	5	12
Dario Azuaga (PAR)	–	6	–
Takato Toguchi (JAP)	20	7	–
Felix Machado (VEN)	–	8	–
Akihigo Nago (JAP)	11	10	–
Danny Romero (USA)	–	–	1
Ernesto Briceno (VEN)	–	–	4
Ubadel Soto (COL)	–	–	5
Eric Morel (USA)	12	–	6
David Vinger (SA)	27	–	7
Joel Luna Zarate (MEX)	–	–	8
Sombak Singchawan (THAI)	–	–	9
Pedro Rincon (COL)	29	–	10

FLYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Chatchai Sasakul (THAI)	C	–	–
Hugo Soto (ARG)	–	C	–
Mark Johnson (USA)	–	–	C
Gabriel Mira (MEX)	1	–	–
Raul Juarez (MEX)	2	–	–
David Guerault (FRA)	3	7	1
Alejandro Montiel (MEX)	4	10	–
Manny Pacquiao (PHIL)	5	4	–
Alex Ali Baba (GHA)	6	–	–
Yong Soon Chang (KOR)	7	–	–
Chokchai Chokviwat (THAI)	8	–	–
Alexander Mahmutov (RUS)	9	–	–
Alfonso Zvenyika (ZIM)	10	–	–
Gilberto Gonzalez (VEN)	–	1	–
Jose Bonilla (VEN)	–	2	–
Saen Sow Ploenchit (THAI)	15	3	–
Denkaosaen Kaowitch (THAI)	–	5	–
Will Grigsby (USA)	11	6	–
Jesper Jensen (DEN)	–	8	–
Ferid Ben Jeddou (TUN)	–	9	3
Vacant	–	–	2
Irene Pacheco (COL)	–	–	4
Yodchingchai Sornthong (THAI)	–	–	5
Yuri Arbachakov (RUS)	–	–	6
Ilido Julio (COL)	18	–	7
Jose Landin (USA)	–	–	8
Pedro Alcazar (PAN)	–	–	9
Luis Rolon (PR)	–	–	10

JR. FLYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Saman Sorjaturong (THAI)	C	–	–
Pichitnoi C. Siriwat (THAI)	–	C	–
Mauricio Pastrana (COL)	–	–	C
Yosam Choi (KOR)	1	–	–
Joma Gamboa (PHIL)	2	1	1
Phanieng Sasiprabha (THAI)	3	–	–
Oscar Andrade (MEX)	4	5	–
Gabriel Munoz (MEX)	5	–	–
Edgar Cardenas (MEX)	6	–	–
Hidenobu Honda (JAP)	7	8	–
Ladislao Vazquez (MEX)	8	–	–
Sangik Yang (KOR)	9	–	–
Sandre Oviedo (ARG)	10	–	–
Carlos Murillo (PAN)	20	2	5
Hadao C.P. Gym (THAI)	–	3	–
Oswaldo Guerrero (MEX)	–	4	–
Medngon 3K Battery (THAI)	27	6	–
Linglom Tawatchai (THAI)	–	7	–
Nelson Dieppa (DR)	–	9	–
Keiji Yamaguchi (JAP)	–	10	–
Vacant	–	–	2
Will Grigsby (USA)	–	–	3
Gill Ikeda (JAP)	–	–	4
Anis Roga (INDO)	–	–	6
Jose Sanjuanelo (COL)	–	–	7
Manuel Jesus Herrera (DR)	13	–	8
Hernan Berrio (COL)	–	–	9
Hawk Makepula (SA)	–	–	10

STRAWWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Ricardo Lopez (MEX)	C	–	–
Rosendo Alvarez (NIC)	–	C	–
Zolani Petelo (SA)	26	–	C
Rocky Lin (JAP)	1	1	–
Wandee Chareon (THAI)	2	–	–
Payak Nakornluang (THAI)	3	8	–
Andy Tabanas (PHIL)	4	10	2
Myung Sup Park (KOR)	5	9	–
Jose Antonio Aguirre (MEX)	6	12	–
Daniel Reyes (COL)	7	11	4
Yasuo Tokimitsu (JAP)	8	–	–
Satoru Abe (JAP)	9	5	–
Alex Sanchez (PR)	10	–	–
Jose Garcia (COL)	–	2	–
Ronnie Magramo (PHIL)	–	3	–
Songkram Porpaoin (THAI)	–	4	–
Chana Porpaoin (THAI)	–	6	–
Randy Mangubat (PHIL)	30	7	–
Luis Lazarte (ARG)	–	–	1
Ratanapol Sow Voraphin (THAI)	17	–	3
Eric Jamili (PHIL)	–	–	5
Jose Laureano (PR)	–	–	6
Faisol Akbar (INDO)	–	–	7
Carmelo Caceres (PHIL)	–	–	8
Rocky Palma (JAP)	–	–	9
Denkaosan Kaowichit (THAI)	–	–	10

DON DUNPHY

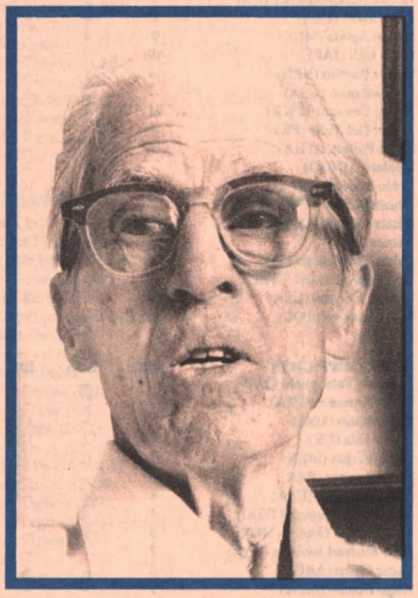
"For Some Reason, The Sport Goes On And On"

(Editor's note: In tribute to the late Don Dunphy, instead of a classic from THE RING, this month we are running a classic from *KO*, THE RING's sister magazine. The following interview was first published in the November 1990 issue of *KO*.)

If boxing doesn't seem quite the same as it was in the good days, maybe it's because the fight game's soundtrack has been altered through the years. There's something missing nowadays when two guys square off in the most dramatic clash in sports, a heavyweight championship fight. What's missing is the voice of Don Dunphy, the most famous boxing announcer of all-time. Imagine the Super Bowl without a crowd cheering or a Jose Canseco home run without that shotgun crack of the bat. That's the sound of boxing without Don Dunphy.

He hasn't worked a fight since he did a round of guest commentary for NBC in 1988. The last big bout he called from start to finish was Leonard-Hearns I in 1981. But Dunphy remains a legend in a business where the good (Tim Ryan), the bald (Marvin Hagler), and the ugly (Howard Cosell) have all tried that simple-looking, yet extremely difficult, task of telling viewers and listeners why the ref is doing a good job, or why Smith's corner is having trouble closing that cut.

Dunphy (who won't tell his age, but says 78 is "in the ballpark") called his first fight, the amateur Diamond Belt Tournament at Madison Square Garden, for WINS-AM in New York in 1939. Years later, when television sets started becoming a part of every American home, so, too, did Dunphy. He broadcast New York Yankees games on TV in 1949, and soon after started working the ***Gillette Friday Night Fights****, first for Mutual Broadcasting, and later for ABC. Dunphy loved boxing, so much that he stopped viewing it as a job and started thinking of it more as a second marriage.*



"I knew baseball inside and out," he says, "but when it came to a broadcast, baseball was very difficult for me. I didn't have the southern gift of gab that Mel Allen and Red Barber had for baseball. When a pitcher went into the stretch, and the batter stepped out of the box, I was saying to myself, 'For goodness sake, get in there and throw the ball.' I couldn't fill those lulls. But boxing came easily. I think, in my mind, I needed to work a quick sport. One with plenty of action."

In Dunphy's heyday, there certainly was plenty of action, from the rise of Joe Louis to the reign of Rocky Marciano. There was Sugar Ray Robinson and Jake LaMotta. And Rocky Graziano and Tony Zale, too. Managing Editor Jeff Ryan discussed those days with Dunphy when the two men met at the announcer's Manhasset, New York, home in July. It proved to be a very entertaining two hours, though it wasn't until we were about to leave that we realized how truly ironic the situation was.

There we were, right in the middle of Don Dunphy's living room. Considering how many living rooms—not to mention bedrooms, kitchens, dining rooms, backyards, and basements—he'd been in throughout America in the past 50 years, it's about time he returned the invitation.

KO Magazine: What are the biggest changes you've observed in the fight game in the past 50 years?

Don Dunphy: *(Laughing)* That's a very broad question, Jeff. Well, I don't think I could have anticipated there would be at least four organizations with champions. When I started, there was only one organization, the NBA. There was a time when I knew every champion's name from flyweight to heavyweight. I couldn't even start to do that today. That's a bad thing. Another big change is the elimination of 15-round bouts. That's a big, tremendous change. There's been a lot of argument on that, whether it should be or not.

KO: What do you think?

DD: I think I prefer the old way, the 15-round bout. What is forgotten is the fact that when Joe Louis fought Abe Simon in Detroit in 1941, it was a bout scheduled for 20 rounds. *(laughs)* I mention that now because it reminds me of my days as sports director at WINS. I used to run a lot of contests that would generate a lot of mail. People would send in their postcards and letters, which impressed potential sponsors. The Louis-Simon fight was in the midst of Joe Louis' so-called "Bum Of The Month" campaign. If you look back, you'll say that Simon, who was a big hulk of a man—weighed 240—was a bum. But, anyway, it was presumed that Louis would knock this guy out in three or four rounds. So I decided to run a contest.

Coming up at Madison Square Garden was a heavyweight match between Max Baer and Lou Nova. The ringside tickets were selling for $16, which was pretty good money back in 1941. I had a contest in which people

would predict the winner of Louis-Simon and the time of the knockout. The three people closest to the actual result would get a pair of ringside seats to the Baer-Nova fight. I got several hundred replies, but the interesting thing is that about 50 people had Louis winning the fight by decision. And the rules of the contest in those days was that if there was a tie, you had to give everyone the same prize. There was just no way I could give 50 people $32 worth of fight tickets.

KO: *(Laughing)* You must have been very nervous on fight night.

DD: Well, I'm listening to the fight, and Louis is all over him in the first round. I'm listening to Sam Taub broadcast the fight, and he says Louis is banging him from pillar to post. But Simon doesn't go down. And it goes on and on and on. Around the eighth round, I'm getting a little apprehensive. It seems to me that Simon is immune to getting hurt and Louis is getting arm-weary from belting him. *(laughs)* Well, we get to the 12th round, and I'm sick. I'm making plans to leave town. Fortunately, in the 13th round, they stopped the fight. I don't know who got the prize, but I was relieved.

KO: Who do you think are the best announcers on the air today? Who do you enjoy listening to?

DD: Al Bernstein on ESPN. I like him. I like Tim Ryan. There are some I could be very critical of. I don't want to mention their names.

KO: Can you at least mention what you don't like about them?

DD: Some of them do a radio broadcast for a television fight. I don't like it when someone says, "That's a left hook. That's a jab. Oh, he hit him with a right cross." When the audience can see that, it gets tiresome. I don't think some of these fellows work at being a good boxing announcer. I can tell by listening to them that they don't do anything about getting better from week to week. When I was working, I used to always go to the weigh-ins. I always thought going to the weigh-ins was so important because you meet the fighters and sense their mood. That sounds like a little thing, but it was one of the big keys to my success.

KO: Whose fault is it that there is so much verbal diarrhea on the airwaves today? Is it the TV producers' fault for encouraging these guys to talk, or have the announcers become fans of their own voices?

DD: I think it's the announcers' fault. You stick a microphone in somebody's face, and they think they must use it. I think it's even worse in baseball than in boxing. If you went to a ballgame, you wouldn't want to have the guy next to you jabbering and jabbering, you know? I think announcers ought to let the fans enjoy the fights and the games wherever possible. Oh sure, it's nice when they're analytical on television. Someone may notice that a fellow's jab was short in the early rounds, and now he's getting it in there more effectively. But all the extra talk is not necessary.

When Joe Louis defended the heavyweight title against Abe Simon in 1941, Dunphy ran a radio contest where listeners tried to guess the time of the stoppage. A decision would have been disastrous for Dunphy, but Louis saved him by finally putting the 240-pounder away in the 13th.

KO: What is the bigger challenge, doing a fight on television or radio?

DD: They are two different media. Television is hard mentally because you are subconsciously saying, "Am I not talking enough? Am I talking too much? Am I being trite? Am I not being analytical? Am I telling them what they already see?" Doing radio is harder physically because you have to talk so fast and be very accurate for a full three minutes. You run out of gas after a while unless you're in shape for it. Doing a 15-round bout is quite a chore.

I went without doing a radio fight for quite a few years, and then they called me to do Leonard-Benitez in 1979. Two or three weeks before the fight, I would sit out in the kitchen and get myself in shape. I'd do a round very fast. Then I'd do another round. I'd do wind sprints. I would talk as fast as I could for 10 seconds, then stop. Then 10 seconds again. When it was time to broadcast, I knew I could do it physically.

KO: That's very interesting. You had to train along with the fighters.

DD: I always liked to do my best, let's put it that way.

KO: *(Laughing)* No wonder some of the guys on the air today sound verbally out-of-shape.

DD: Like I said before, some people think if you stick a microphone in front of them they have to use it. They shouldn't worry. If they don't talk, it won't go away.

KO: Some critics say that baseball is better on radio because the listener can create his own mental picture from the words the announcer says. As a fan, do you prefer hearing a fight on the radio, or watching one on TV?

DD: Well, Jeff, there's very little boxing on radio now. You know, I think not having fights on radio is unfair to the blind. When fights went off radio, I used to get letters from people who wrote, "My father is blind and he enjoys the fights. Can't you get them back on the radio? Is there any way of getting them back?" Unless it's a tremendous fight, like Michael Spinks vs. Larry Holmes, there's no radio today.

KO: When a fight is on radio or TV, though, which do you prefer to experience as a fan?

DD: I think it's a good point about the announcers creating a mental picture on radio for some sports. I can't say that about boxing, though. The same doesn't pertain to boxing, as far as I'm concerned. I don't think you can beat the television picture for a boxing match.

KO: What were your most exciting moments at ringside?

DD: There were several exciting things. Like the time Joe Louis knocked out Billy Conn in

the 13th round. Louis took a bad beating in the 11th and 12th, and was actually going to lose that title if it went 15 rounds. Another exciting time was a similar situation. Rocky Marciano took such a beating in the 11th and 12th rounds against Jersey Joe Walcott in their first fight that I didn't think Rocky would even show up for the 13th. But he showed up. He was in great shape, and he knocked out Walcott with the single most devastating, important punch—that right hand to the jaw—that I ever saw.

Another exciting thing was the first Zale-Graziano fight, which I consider the most exciting fight I ever did. I did that for radio. It went six rounds, and they were really bouncing around. The winner, Zale, was in much worse shape than Rocky was. Rocky got hit with a solar plexus punch that floored him and numbed him for a few minutes. When he got up after the fight was over, he was fresh. Zale was not fresh at all.

KO: Of everything you've ever seen, what was the most shocking?

DD: My most shocking moment came when I was doing a fight between Tony Anthony, a contender for the light heavyweight title, and a Canadian champion whose name escapes me at this point (Gordon Wallace). It was at the Garden when I was doing radio. Anthony hit this Canadian champion in the first round, and the guy came right out of the ring and rolled on top of me. *(laughing)* He knocked the microphone out of my hand, and all I could do was sit there and laugh. Later, I thought about how it would be a great publicity stunt if I sat there with my head down and made believe I was out too. The papers would have said, "DOUBLE KNOCKOUT AT THE GARDEN!"

One thing that didn't shock me, but was sad, was when Marciano knocked out Louis. It didn't bother me who won the fight, but I didn't want to see Louis get knocked out that way. What was even more devastating was when I was doing television, and Benny "Kid" Paret got knocked out by Emile Griffith. That was a real shocker. You didn't know at the time that he was hurt that seriously. You just hoped he recovered. But he lay in a coma for days and finally died.

KO: You created a bit of a stir recently. You appeared on NBC's broadcast of "The 15 Greatest Rounds" and chose the first round of the Hagler-Hearns fight as the best ever. It seemed like a good choice. But later, you were quoted in the paper as saying that you made a mistake, and meant to select the 13th round of the first Louis-Conn fight. That was a dramatic round, but it was also one-sided. Do you really think it's the greatest round in history?

DD: Hearns-Hagler was a great round. Nobody should make any apologies for picking that round. What happened was that we all agreed to be unanimous. Before we went on the air for the final segment, the panel agreed to pick the same round. Earlier in the show, I had been in a confrontation with Angelo Dundee, as you recall, over the Ali-Liston phantom punch. *(laughs)* I had also been in a confrontation off the air, arguing about a record. And I didn't want to be the *bete noire* (troublemaker).

"Some announcers do a radio broadcast for a television fight. I don't like it when someone says, 'That's a left hook. That's a jab.' When the audience can see that, it gets tiresome."

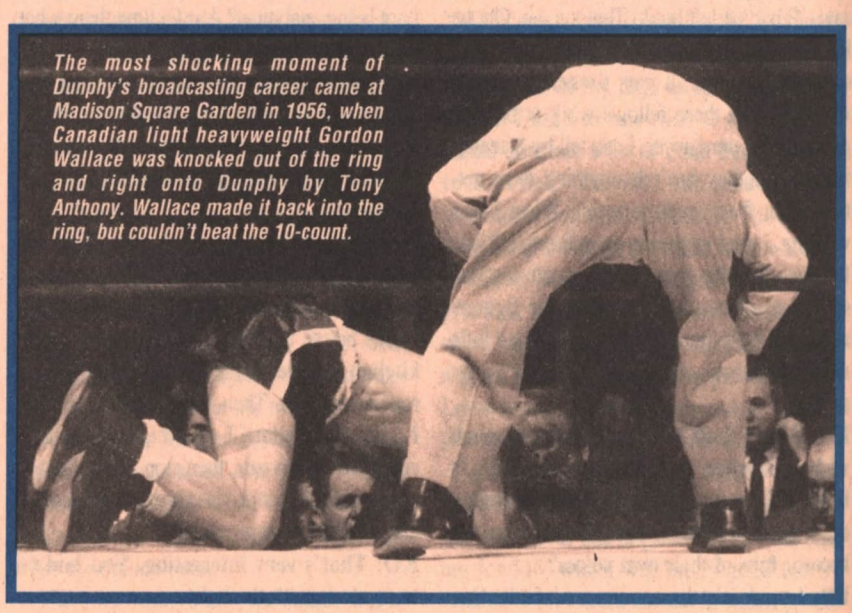
KO: So you selected Hagler-Hearns because you didn't want to rock the boat?

DD: I didn't want to. But I disagree with you. The 13th round of the Louis-Conn fight was not a nothing round. Every time Conn got hurt, he tore into Louis again, the way he had in the earlier rounds. Until Louis finally nailed him. I think that was a fairly dramatic round. That round was fairly close up until Louis nailed the uppercut that really unsettled Conn.

KO: Who is the best fighter you've ever seen, and why?

DD: Well, it's become a cliche, but I'd say Sugar Ray Robinson. To me he was good enough to win the lightweight title, though he never got a shot at it. He did win the welterweight title. He did win the middleweight title. And if heat didn't get him against Joey Maxim, he would've won the light heavyweight title as well. You take a look at Robinson's record, and you see he was beaten by guys like Denny Moyer. This was all at the end of his career. You can't downgrade Louis as a heavyweight champion because he lost to Rocky Marciano and he lost to Ezzard Charles at the very end.

Everyone mentions how durable Jake LaMotta was, and how he couldn't be knocked down. Sugar Ray Robinson fought over 200 fights and never was stopped! The



The most shocking moment of Dunphy's broadcasting career came at Madison Square Garden in 1956, when Canadian light heavyweight Gordon Wallace was knocked out of the ring and right onto Dunphy by Tony Anthony. Wallace made it back into the ring, but couldn't beat the 10-count.

only time he didn't finish a fight was that night in the 106-degree heat at Yankee Stadium. He was durable. People talk about how great Sugar Ray Leonard is, and Leonard is a great fighter. But he hasn't had 50 fights.

KO: You certainly have plenty of entries on a resume, but which fight do you wish you could have worked that you didn't?

DD: Oh, I don't know Jeff. It's hard to say. I would've liked to have done fights longer, especially on TV. It was a shame that they went off. *The Friday Night Fights* went off television in 1964, and that was kind of a sad time. However, I always bounced back. They had a fight in the Garden between George Chuvalo and Floyd Patterson after that night, and I did the closed-circuit. Incidentally, Muhammad Ali was my fellow commentator that night. He had won the championship, and the winner of Chuvalo-Patterson was going to go on and face him for the title. I felt fortunate to work with him. Maybe it was because I was recognized as good at announcing boxing that I got these assignments. Or maybe it was because there weren't many boxing announcers around. I have to throw that in.

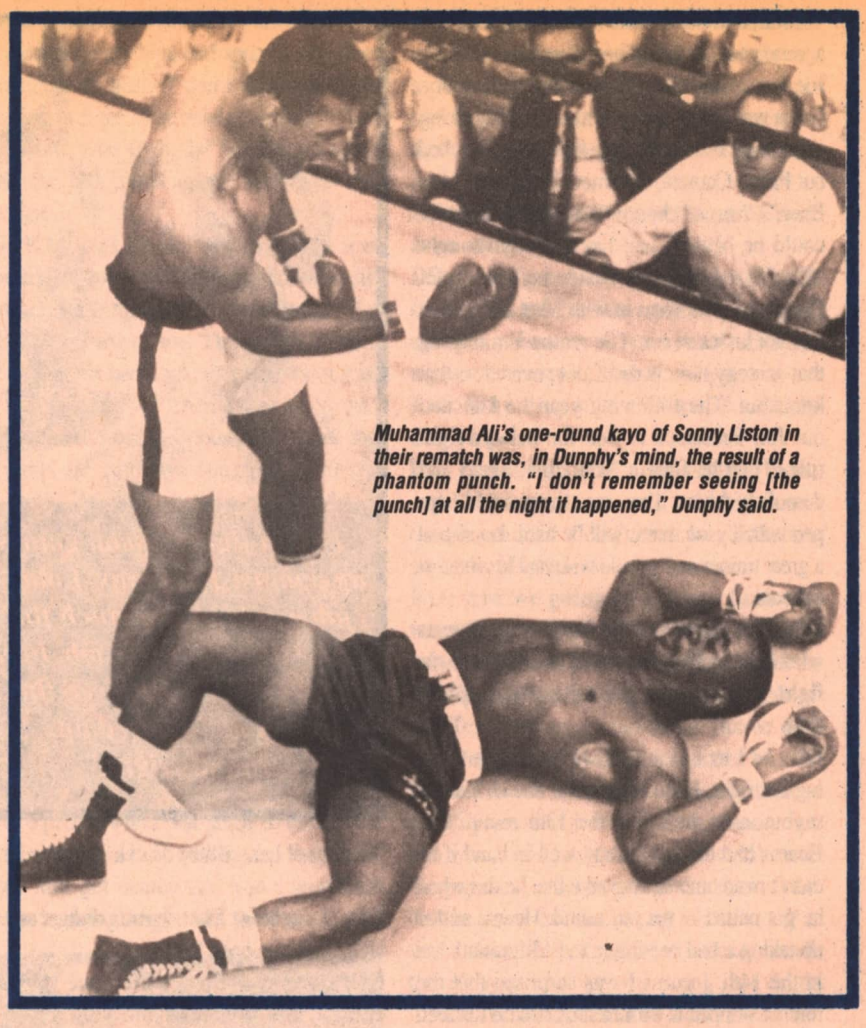
KO: That's probably not the reason.

DD: *(Laughs)*

KO: You were quite candid on "The 15 Greatest Rounds" when you were asked your opinion of the Muhammad Ali-Sonny Liston rematch. You said that you never saw a punch knock Liston out. When Angelo Dundee told you there was a punch and said, "Forget about it," you added, "I'd like to forget about it." From your vantage point that night, describe what happened.

DD: I was doing that for the Canadian Broadcasting Company. I honestly didn't see anything that looked like a punch that should have knocked somebody down. I referred to it as "a flick." When you are doing a radio broadcast, you can't get everything in. If something looks inconsequential, you don't even try to mention it. You're too busy trying to catch up. I had a way of having a backlog in my mind. I might be looking at a left hook now and calling a right cross that I saw a second before. And that's what may have happened on this particular punch.

As I saw it on the replay, it looked like a flick. I don't remember seeing it at all the night it happened. *(laughs)* What else was strange was that Liston got up off the floor, and these fellows fought again. There was so much confusion there. Jersey Joe Walcott, who was the referee, didn't know what the count was. While he went over to ask the timekeeper, Liston, who presumably was knocked out by this phantom punch, started to walk again. *(laughing)* He couldn't have been very hurt.



Muhammad Ali's one-round kayo of Sonny Liston in their rematch was, in Dunphy's mind, the result of a phantom punch. "I don't remember seeing [the punch] at all the night it happened," Dunphy said.

KO: Give us your theory on what happened that night?

DD: I have no theory on it. I was just surprised that this guy got knocked out by something I didn't even see.

KO: Did he take a dive?

DD: I don't know. I never get into that. I may have been curious about it, but I never talk about it.

KO: It may have been the strangest boxing night ever.

DD: And you know what else was strange? Here we have the heavyweight championship of the world, Muhammad Ali vs. Sonny Liston, a man who had been once considered unbeatable. They're fighting at this place in Lewiston, Maine, and when I walked in nobody was collecting tickets. If you wanted to go in off the street, you just went in.

KO: What fights would you like to see today?

DD: I'd like to see Douglas-Holyfield. Foreman-Tyson. I'd like to see Riddick Bowe get a chance at the title. I think he has so much talent and so much potential. But the way boxing goes, I think it could be a couple of years before he gets a shot at the title. The Holyfield-Douglas winner has to fight someone, but I'm sure it won't be Riddick Bowe. Not for a while.

KO: Most boxing experts yawn when the Holyfield-Douglas matchup is mentioned. Why does it appeal to you?

DD: Well it's a heavyweight championship. I always thought Holyfield was a good contender. I thought he'd have given Tyson a good fight. What's interesting to me is that, before Tyson lost the title, several of the fighters who got in there with him were actually scared to death or rigid because they were tense. I don't think good fighters are going to feel that way anymore against Tyson because they know he can be beaten.

Still, don't count out Tyson. I think there's a very good comparison between the young Joe Louis and the young Mike Tyson. Joe Louis was going along in his career knocking everybody out. In his big fights, he knocked out Primo Carnera, a former champ, and Max Baer, a former champ. Nobody thought he could be beaten, just like nobody thought Mike Tyson could be beaten before he met Douglas. Louis went in with Max Schmeling and got knocked out. The reason I'm making that analogy now is that Louis overcame that knockout. The following year, he knocked out Jim Braddock to win the heavyweight title. Then he fought Schmeling again and demolished him. The same thing could happen with Tyson, but it will be hard. Louis had a great trainer and people who had his interest at heart.

KO: You are one of the few boxing experts who believe that the first Leonard-Hearns fight was stopped prematurely. Explain that.

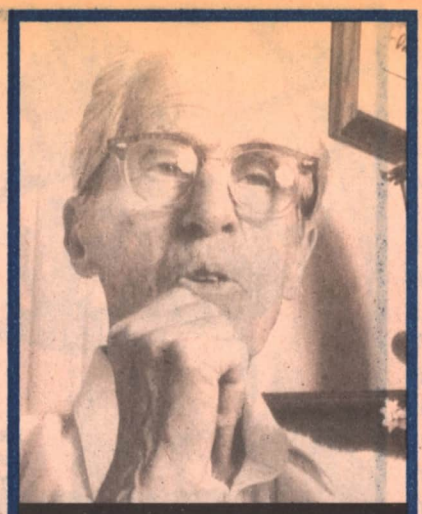
DD: As I look, I think I was wrong. In scoring the fight, I had Hearns far ahead. I recall saying, as it went into the 13th round, that Hearns had the fight pretty well in hand if he didn't make another mistake like he did when he got nailed in the 6th round. Hearns ended up taking a bad beating in the 13th round, but in the 14th, I guess I was surprised that the referee stopped it with Hearns still on his feet. I automatically said, "Oh, no!" Now as I look at it on the replay, the referee was probably right.

KO: It's fairly well-known that in the old days, boxing writers were paid off by fight managers and promoters. How ...

DD: I was never a boxing writer, but I had managers come up to me and say, "Make my fighter sound good on the air." I used to just laugh at it. But nobody ever offered me money. I'll tell you what, though. I used to do horse racing results on WINS. Another fellow and myself would go on at different times all day long giving the results. Somebody came up to me and said, "Look, I'll make it worth your while if you could give us a signal about who won a certain race."

KO: In other words, they wanted the race results before anyone else got it, so they could make a bet on it?

DD: That's right. They'd get on the phone to call their bookie. And if I coughed, it meant their horse won. I was supposed to cough and then not give the result of the race over the air until 20 or 30 seconds later. I said to them, "Get out of here. I'll be dead tomorrow if I do that."



"I can't figure Tyson going up against Joe Louis. Louis' jab would be too much for him. He had some jab, he really did. And I loved the way he followed up with his right."

KO: ***(Laughing)*** **That sounds dangerous.**

DD: Could've been fatal.

KO: It seems as though everyone your age chooses the fighters from your era and says they're better than today's fighters. Is that just the bias of someone who grew up with boxing at that time, or is it something that the old fighters really did better than today's kids?

DD: Well, I think they were better prepared back then. In the old days, you wouldn't see a Leon Spinks going into a heavyweight championship fight after eight pro fights, one of which was a draw. That would be unbelievable then. Fighters came up the hard way, in the clubs and fighting preliminary bouts in the Garden. And they had more and better trainers in those days. We have some great trainers in this era, like Gil Clancy and Angelo Dundee. But you don't hear a lot of trainers' names anymore. In those days there were famous trainers. You had Whitey Bimstein, Ray Arcel, Freddie Brown. Oh, so many of them. Physically, the young people of today may be better athletes. But they are not better prepared to fight.

KO: Who was the greatest heavyweight champion you ever saw?

DD: I always put Joe Louis, Rocky Marciano, and Muhammad Ali in the same category. It would be hard to choose between them. Maybe I'd have come down to between Marciano and Louis. I think the difference would have been Louis' left jab, which was the equivalent of somebody else's hard right. Rocky was prone to cuts. Ezzard Charles cut him badly on the nose. But if Rocky hit you, you were apt to go out. On a given night, Ali might stay away and outbox him. But I don't think so.

KO: What is your answer to the argument that Louis and Marciano were too small for Ali or the heavyweights of today, that they only weighed 185 pounds?

DD: I don't think that makes any difference. Louis fought big people. He fought Primo Carnera, Abe Simon. Max Baer was a big man when Joe knocked him out. And Lou Nova wasn't tiny. Dempsey fought Jess Willard. They say Tyson would've been bigger than Marciano. He wouldn't have been any taller than him. I can't figure Tyson going up against Joe Louis. Louis' jab would be too much for him. He had some jab, he really did. And I loved the way he followed up with his right. You should see it in slow motion. It ends up a foot away from where it landed. It's just like a golfer's swing. The ball is gone, but he's still swinging.

KO: What do you think of the George Foreman comeback. Is it something you get a kick out of?

DD: Nah, I don't get a kick out of it. It bothers me less now than when he started. It was inconceivable that someone could be out of boxing for so many years and then, at the age of 39, decide to come back. I hoped he wouldn't. As a matter of fact, I can honestly say I had hoped that Sugar Ray Leonard wouldn't come back after he had his eye injury, too. But as far as Foreman is concerned, he's doing all right. Apparently he hits as hard as ever. I was surprised, really, when Ali beat him in Zaire.

KO: Do you see a positive or negative end for Foreman's return? Can he become champion again, or is that too far-fetched?

DD: Well, he might be 43 before he gets a shot at the title. They're talking about Foreman-Tyson. That would be a more interesting fight than Holyfield-Douglas. I think Douglas should've had a good p.r. man running around, keeping his name in the news. He's almost forgotten.

KO: Can Foreman beat Tyson?

DD: I think that's up to Tyson. If Tyson goes

in there with the attitude that he had before the Douglas fight, he might get knocked out. But if he trains awfully hard, I think he'll be awfully rough on Foreman. When George goes down, there's a lot of picking up to do. He's awful big. He didn't get up when Ali nailed him.

KO: Are you inclined to root for the old guy in a situation like that?

DD: If I'm doing the fight, I'm not going to root. But, I won't be doing it, so I'm free to root one way or the other. I would root for him. I like George. As a matter of fact, I was very impressed when he fought at Madison Square Garden for the first time. I did the fight, and he said to reporters afterward, "I always wanted to do a fight at Madison Square Garden so Don Dunphy could interview me right after the fight." I thought that was very nice. And that got me very fond of him.

KO: Who's the nicest guy you've met in boxing?

DD: I liked Louis, Rocky Marciano, Emile Griffith, Beau Jack.

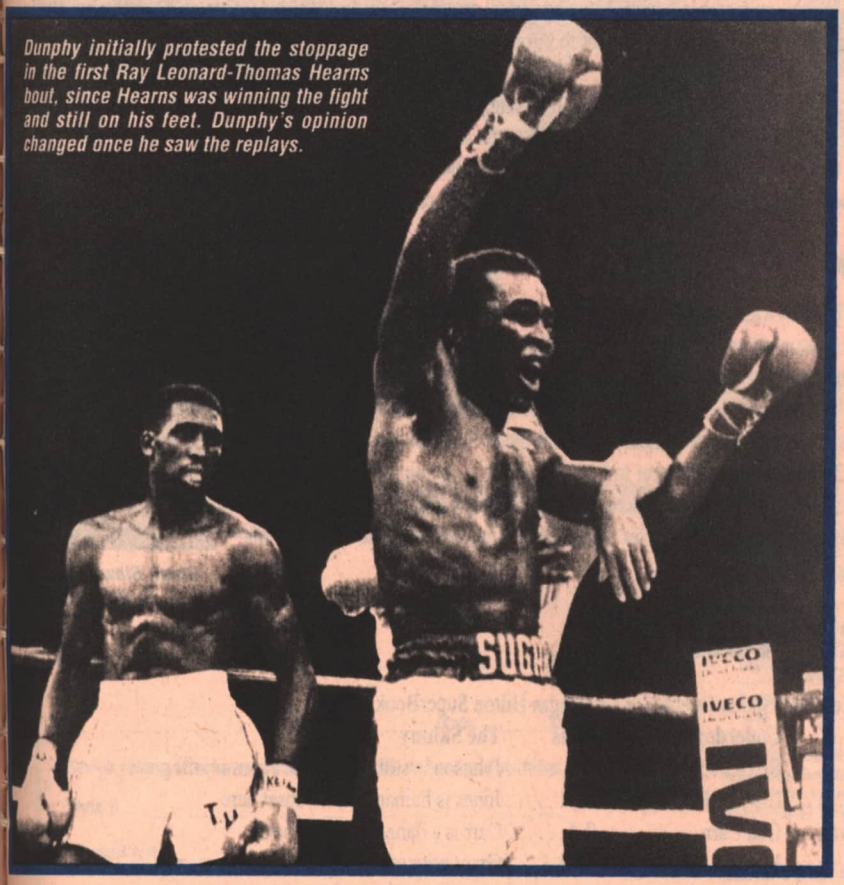
KO: What was Rocky really like? Young fans just don't know very much about him.

DD: He was very quiet, hardly a braggart. A very pleasant person to be with. He used to train at Grossinger's [in New York State] and we used to go up there and spend a few days watching him train. I don't think anybody went into a fight more ready physically than Rocky did. That's why he was able to come out in the 13th round against Walcott in that first fight.

KO: Why was he the one guy who was able to stay away once he retired? How did he resist the temptation to come back?

DD: That's hard to say. There were rumors that he hurt his back. I don't know about that. I was very surprised when I saw him retire, but he had run out of opponents. I think the only one he could've fought was Floyd Patterson. He couldn't fight Archie Moore again. The heavyweight division was rather empty. And maybe Rocky had good investments. I don't think he ever considered coming back after he retired.

I was very fond of Rocky, but I never got close to any fighter. You wouldn't see me go around with my arms around the heavyweight champion, as some former announcers have done. First of all, it wasn't in my nature to get close to people who I was going to describe. I didn't want to like the person and then have to see him get beaten up. And I wouldn't want to be doing a fight with somebody I was fond of. I didn't want to be rooting for him and have it show in my broadcast, or else try to lean the other way to show that I wasn't favoring him. It was a business with me, and I think it should be with all the other announcers in all sports.



Dunphy initially protested the stoppage in the first Ray Leonard-Thomas Hearns bout, since Hearns was winning the fight and still on his feet. Dunphy's opinion changed once he saw the replays.

KO: What did you think of Howard Cosell as an announcer?

DD: I usually try to avoid that topic, but I will say this: He had the most retentive memory of any sports announcer I've known. And he had a great vocabulary. Those are the pluses.

KO: Why do you try to avoid talking about him?

DD: Howard isn't bothering anybody now, and I'd like to leave well enough alone. *(laughs)* At least, I don't think he's bothering anybody. Maybe he is.

KO: Are we going to assume that you weren't too supportive of his decision to take a stand and stop announcing fights?

DD: He said the fight between Larry Holmes and Tex Cobb was a mismatch. But he said that after the fact. I don't recall that he said that before the fight. He had been in boxing for 25 years, and it was in all the papers that this was a mismatch. If Howard didn't read the papers, I'd be surprised. Suddenly, one day, he discovers that boxing is a sleaze. If it was a sleaze then, it had been a sleaze for all the 25 years that he was doing it. I think frankly, he found out that he didn't need it for his career anymore.

KO: Are you going to call any fights ever again?

DD: I doubt it.

KO: Would you like to?

DD: No, I wouldn't want to. It would be too arduous. I don't want to have to go to the weigh-in, talk to everybody, learn who has a left and who has a right cross.

KO: Sum up for me your association with boxing and what you think of the game after all you've witnessed through the years?

DD: It's amazing to me. People come up to me and say, "Boxing isn't what it used to be." But I looked in the paper last Sunday, and all three networks had a prize fight on. That is not even mentioning the cable stations like HBO and ESPN. There's so much boxing on. And for some reason the sport goes on and on. There's an old expression, "The poor are always with you." And boxing, I suppose, is the poor man's sport. It's amazing that it goes on. It's been on it's way out a couple of times, but I think it'll always be around. ■

LOOKING AHEAD

By Eric Raskin

FRIDAY NIGHT IS FIGHT NIGHT ... AGAIN

Could the cancellation of USA's *Tuesday Night Fights* have been a blessing in disguise? Rumors abound that the *TNF* crew will catch on with another cable network, so there may not turn out to be any loss there. Time Warner's TNT, inspired to try their hand at boxing by the presumed *TNF* void, will have launched its new monthly program by the time you read this. And ESPN2, which along with ESPN has shown only second-rate fights on a sporadic basis in recent years, is now starting a Friday night boxing series that promises to feature better fights than we've grown accustomed to seeing on "The Deuce."

Bill Cayton, the former co-manager of **Mike Tyson** who recently sold his vast collection of fight films to ESPN, now has an administrative post with the sports network and is heading up the new series, which will run a minimum of 46 weeks per year.

Cayton: Developing new show on ESPN2

"It will be a 2½-hour program, featuring the very best live boxing as well as the very best classic fights from our library," Cayton said. "We will have a larger budget to work with, though how much larger is unclear. I'd like to go back to the early days of boxing on ABC, when live boxing was more popular than football. If the ESPN Friday night fight show enjoys all the assets I hope to put into it, it will become very, very popular. Hopefully, the series will do well enough to eventually make the leap to ABC sports."

Unfortunately for fans of longtime ESPN fight analyst **Al Bernstein**, Cayton's vision for the new show doesn't include the knowledgeable commentator.

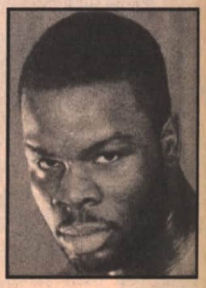
"Al doesn't fit into my plans," Cayton said. "Al does a wonderful job, but I want a fresh new approach to boxing, brand new faces."

One factor that will go a long way to determining how successful the show will be is the appointment of a matchmaker. The decision had not been finalized as we went to press, but Cayton was pushing for the job to go to the man he called "the best matchmaker in the business," Philadelphia promoter **J Russell Peltz**. Peltz intended for the first show to emanate from the legendary Blue Horizon on October 2, with hot super middleweight contenders **Thomas Tate** and **Demetrius Davis** meeting in the main event. Peltz is very opinionated about the troubled state of boxing, and hopes he can use the new show to improve the sport.

"I'm looking to go back to the days of good, solid 10-round boxing," Peltz said. "There are too many bogus world title fights, and I'm trying to weed them out. Boxing is suffocating itself with all these titles, to the point where titles don't really mean anything anymore. The seniors tour is successful because people don't know who most of the champs are these days, but they remember guys like **Duran**, **Camacho**, **Holmes**, and **Foreman**. I think this series, if I can do what I want to do, can help boxing big time."

LISTEN UP

Undefeated phenom **Michael Grant** was hoping to face Syrian **Ahmad Abdin** in September on HBO, but the fight had to be postponed when it was discovered Grant had become the latest in an unusually long list of heavyweight contenders to recently contract hepatitis. Instead, Grant is expected to be ready to fight in November, with Abdin still the probable opponent. Though a relative unknown, Abdin, 24-1-3 (10), holds a win over **Corey Sanders** and held **Obed Sullivan** to a draw in '94. His only loss was a 12-round decision last year to **Larry Donald** ... As we went to press, **Main Events** was working to match Team Freedom member **Diobelys Hurtado** against Mexican veteran junior welterweight **Bolillo Gonzalez**. Matchmaker **Carl Moretti** said they were hoping to make the fight for November.



Grant: Slowed down by illness

Las Vegas Hilton

FUTURE FIGHTS

By Art Manteris

VP/Director of Race and Sports Operations Las Vegas Hilton SuperBook

Favorite	Underdog	Odds	The Skinny
Roy Jones	Reggie Johnson	9-1	Johnson is still very good. Jones is still great
Roy Jones	Graciano Rocchigiani	12-1	Jones is human, but no upset here
Oscar De La Hoya	Oba Carr	7-1	Carr is a dangerous opponent
Lennox Lewis	Michael Grant	21/2-1	Grant not quite ready yet
Yory Boy Campas	Fernando Vargas	Pick-'em	I'm not as high on Vargas as most

The Ring Sportswear Collection

The Ring Tradition Continues ...

Over the past 75 years, *The Ring* has established a tradition of unsurpassed excellence. That tradition continues with *The Ring* Sportswear Collection, featuring the highest-quality apparel available!

BASEBALL CAP: You'll be the envy of your friends when you wear this sporty baseball cap. Constructed of 100% cotton, this cap features *The Ring* logo and "The Bible Of Boxing" tagline embroidered on the front panel. The adjustable cotton strap-back allows for a custom fit. Available in black only. One size fits all. $15.95

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$35.50 = M, L, XL
$39.50 = XXL

T-SHIRT: You'll look like a world champ when wearing *The Ring* T-shirt. This quality "T" is the standard by which all others are judged. Our 100% preshrunk cotton shirt features an embroidered three-color *Ring* logo and "The Bible Of Boxing" tagline. Available in black only.
$14.95 = M, L, XL
$18.95 = XXL

BASEBALL JERSEY: Talk about sporty! *The Ring* baseball jersey scores big with a two-color combination...gray with red trim and red buttons or gray with black trim and black buttons. This 100% all-cotton, button-down jersey features an embroidered three-color—red, white, & gold—*Ring* logo and "The Bible Of Boxing" tagline. $29.95 = M, L, XL

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Baseball Cap		Black	—	
Sweatshirt		Gray		
Sweatshirt		Black		
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			Shipping & Handling	
			TOTAL ENCLOSED	

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